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# MAIDENTHORPE;

OR,

INTERESTING EVENTS

ABOUT THE YEAR 1825.

BY

JEREMIAH BRIEFLESS, ESQ.,

OF THE OUTER TEMPLE, FELLOW OF NO SOCIETY.

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“The Bee extracts matter from the Flowers of the Garden and the Field, but works and fashions it by its own efforts.”—*Bacon*, 1620.

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## CONTENTS.

### VOL. II.

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIX. JOURNEY—DOVER TO LONDON ..	1
XX. FORRESTER'S NARRATIVE.. ..	18
XXI. MR. HARGRAVE .. ..	54
XXII. LORD BOSWORTH .. ..	59
XXIII. PIERREPOINT'S NARRATIVE .. ..	78
XXIV. THE LAST INSTALMENT .. ..	100
XXV. SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT .. ..	117
XXVI. FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE .. ..	122
XXVII. THE GLORIOUS UNCERTAINTY.. ..	140
XXVIII. CONQUEST HALL .. ..	168
XXIX. THE BALL .. ..	197
XXX. THE RESCUE .. ..	216
XXXI. THE ALARM .. ..	224
XXXII. ADVENTURES AFTER THE BALL .. ..	230
XXXIII. TAKING THE INVENTORY .. ..	267
XXXIV. THE WEDDING .. ..	274
XXXV. BAD NEWS.. ..	280
XXXVI. THE WILL .. ..	290
XXXVII. EXPLANATION .. ..	297
XXXVIII. FINAL ARRANGEMENT .. ..	306
XXXIX. CONCLUSION .. ..	317



# MAIDENTHORPE.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### JOURNEY—DOVER TO LONDON.

THERE was in former times, that is about the period of the events here recorded, something very exhilarating in travelling in a hack post-chaise ; especially on a principal road, where the turn out was in all respects good, and the pace steady and reasonably fast. The light and convenient form of the vehicle, too, so nearly approaching an open carriage that you had throughout your route the view of the country in front and on either side, combined with the absence of all trouble (the needful supply of two shillings per mile pre-supposed), generally raised the spirits of those embarked on this agreeable species of locomotion.

Lady Susan felt that, and enjoyed also the aspect of her native country, the rural character and cheerfulness

of which she felt to be a pleasing contrast to the open fields and extended plains of the eastern part of Belgium and the north of Germany, no less than the small enclosures of the flat country near the coast. It must also be recollected, that the road through the "pleasant and fruitful country of Kent," as old "Izaak Walton" justly describes it, affords some of the finest prospects that our island boasts of: and in the season of her ladyship's travelling the fruit orchards and hop gardens gave variety and vivacity to the scene. She paid strict attention to the *carte de route* throughout the journey, and made short stay at the splendid hotel at Rochester, regarding chiefly the comfort and refreshment of her maid. After paying a very heavy bill for a very light refection, she resumed her journey just at the period that the sun passed the meridian, and the day became rather overcast; and as she drew towards London, and began to consider how she should manage on her arrival there, her spirits became rather depressed, and her thoughts reverted to the happy interval she had enjoyed at Ems, and a train of melancholy reflections arose as to the circumstances which had confined her to mere snatches of communication with Bohun, and the impediments which would arise to their future intercourse; among which his self-imposed restraint, which made him so strictly observant of the line of propriety, and even etiquette, appeared not the least influential.

Her maid, who had noticed the change of her counte-

nance, and now perceived a tear stealing down her mistress's cheek, took the liberty to express her condolence, and said, it was melancholy to see her ladyship so dull, and asked if she might make bold to talk and divert her a little? and as she received a nod of permission she began by singing the praises of her own country, and her delight at being restored to it; on which her ladyship remarked, "but, surely, you must allow, Lucy, that you saw many fine things and nice people abroad, and was not everybody very civil to you?"

"Yes, my lady, but what then? Oh! dear me, I think the building of the Tower of Babel must be the wickedest thing told of in all the Bible; because it is such cruel punishment that people can't speak to one another."

"The people of different countries," said her ladyship, laughing.

"Certainly, my lady: why here we've been abroad ten weeks, and I have not been able to talk freely with any one all that time, except Lady Wolfe's servant, and I couldn't bear her."

"Perhaps that may be for your advantage, Lucy," said her ladyship, "for the foreign men have rather a preference for nice wholesome looking English girls like you, and you might have been led into danger if they could have made you understand all their feelings towards you."

“Well, my lady, I don’t see that; they seemed to mean to be very civil, certainly, but it was very odd, they was always calling me ‘jolly;’ now I don’t see that I’m any fatter nor clumsier shaped than *their* women; and, as to eating and drinking, why the women where we’ve been eat and drank more than twice as much as me, actually they did, but your ladyship must have noticed what a business their dinner is, why it lasts two hours!”

“My good girl, you need not have fretted yourself about the men calling you ‘joli,’ for that means ‘pretty.’”

“Law, my lady, does it indeed; well, I assure you, they all called me so.”

“I dare say; but don’t be too vain upon it, for their taste and the taste of the English people may not accord. At all events you may be satisfied with this, that where-ever you went they were civil to you.”

“Yes, certainly, my lady, they was very civil; in particular Mr. Cornelius, who was the valet of Colonel Martius, and he got me a ticket to go to the play; and that was a very great treat; but, oh! dear me, how much better it would have been if it had been in English, I should so have liked to understand every word that was said.”

“But you could comprehend what it was about.”

“Why yes, my lady, I think I did; but then some of ’em went on as if they hardly understood it themselves.”



“There certainly was a great difference among the performers.”

“Yes, indeed, my lady, if they had all been like him as acted the captain, it would have been quite a different thing; lawk, what a spirit he had! some of the others seemed more like school boys or raw recruits instead of players.”

“Yes, he was a brilliant actor, and, as you say, moved with a spirit and grace that some of the others were sadly deficient in.”

“Pray, my lady, wasn’t he the same gentleman that I have seen walking sometimes with you and Lady Wolfe?”

“Yes, he was.”

“I thought so, my lady, well, now it’s quite surprising that such a nice, pleasant, gentle sort of a man as he was could come out in that way, and yet they tell me he’s not a soldier neither.”

“No; but surely you can understand that a man may appear on the stage as a soldier who has never actually been in the army. A performer may appear in the character of a king one day, and that of a robber the next, and act the part of a lawyer or a doctor the day after. In the play that you saw, Mr. König only performed the part of a captain of robbers, and endeavoured to give himself the air and appearance of such a character.”

“Yes, my lady, I understand; but, dear me, in that

part where he made love how natural that was: really, my lady, I think he is in love, or he could not have been so true to the life."

"Indeed, pray what makes you so knowing about love matters, has anybody been on his knees to you?"

"Oh, no, my lady, I'm sure I hope you'll forgive me if I've said anything that was wrong, but, dear me, there was something in his manner that made me think no woman hardly could have said no to him, that is, if he'd spoke English."

"Why, I fancy, Lucy, a man can make himself understood pretty well on that subject without words."

"Yes, my lady, and a woman too; and, certainly, I could judge very well that them two was quite of the same way of thinking at last, for all she seemed so against him at first. Well, dear me, it's a pity though to think how poor girls may get persuaded when a handsome man like that goes on his knees and talks 'em over in such a winning way as he did; indeed, my lady, I don't think he need have gone on his knees at all to some as I knows of."

"What do you mean?" said Lady Susan, with great surprise and indignation.

"I hope no offence, my lady, but, to tell you the truth, Lady Wolfe wanted me once to take a note to him, but, I said 'no, I couldn't think of it, particularly without asking your ladyship, and more than that, she had got her own servant and might send her if she

liked ;' and she looked very black, and said, ' I had lost a handsome present by refusing her.' "

" You did quite right, Lucy, I begin to think she is a bad woman."

" Well, my lady, I think it's easy to see that, for she's uncommon free with the men."

The lady, thinking it high time to change the conversation, then said, " Did you see anything of Mr. König after I went away from Ems that morning ?"

" No, my lady, I did not, though I was walking about all the morning with Mr. Cornelius on the promenade, and hearing the bands, and seeing the place, and seeing 'em dance they roundabouts. After dinner we went into them places where they play, and it was wonderful to see how the gold and silver shifted about. If I had had a little money to begin with I might perhaps have made my fortune in a day ; but just at that time the gentleman at Coblenz came up, for the waiter dodged me about till he found me, and then I got your ladyship's letter, and the gentleman told me something unpleasant had happened to you, and you didn't mean to come back, and he ordered me to pack everything as quick as I could, and he took me and all the things over in his carriage to your ladyship."

" Very lucky for you it was, I think, that he did take you away, for you had no business in those places. Now tell me how you got on with the conducteur."

" Oh, pretty well, my lady, he was a dull sort of

body, and somebody said he had a wife and three children; they called the wife 'a farm' in his language, and the children 'arnfans,' that isn't so very wide away from infants, but, dear me, it's very disgusting to hear a wife called 'a farm.' In course I took very little notice of him."

"Neither did I," said Lady Susan, "but he seemed very attentive."

"Oh, yes, my lady, he had a sharp eye when we was at the 'tarble dote,' as they called it; he saw in a moment if I did not like the wine or victuals, and was very civil and came and tasted anything I did not seem to like, and ordered it to be changed immediately. I took notice that he was very particular about ordering everything for your ladyship, and really he had a more commanding way with him than you might expect."

"The conducteurs have much influence," said Lady Susan, "and I dare say he liked good living himself."

"No, my lady, he only tasted the wine for you and me, and never drank it or set down to dinner; he lived entirely on 'caffy-o-lay,' as they called it, with bread soaked in it. You see, my lady, he was very ill, and got worse and worse and fell away a great deal before he left us—did not your ladyship notice it?"

"Why, really, I did not observe him generally, but at Dover, when he came to settle with me, I certainly was struck by his appearance, and thought he looked very ill, and was going to speak about it, but the waiter came

in at the moment, and he turned round and set off without stopping to hear what I had got to say, so that I lost sight of him. Do you know what was the matter with him?"

"Yes, my lady, it was in his neck and his breast; the housemaid at that inn at Ostend was one of the sensiblest people I met with abroad, for she talked English a'most as well as French; and she told me that he had a poultice put on them places both in the morning and overnight, and the places was shocking bad, and she thought it was the king's evil; but he told her, it was the bite of a dog as seized him by the throat somewhere down the Rhind. What was the name of that place as we come from, my lady?"

"Coblenz?"

"Yes, that was it; and she said he warn't fit to travel, but ought to be at home and a-bed; but, you see, he would keep on, because these conducteurs are so greedy after the money when the English go abroad, that they won't give it in. They've their season, you know, my lady, just like the shops at the West End, and, in course, they don't like to lose it, for I've a notion they live very hard at other times: and she told me, that underneath his clothes his skin was as white and as smooth as mine; but I didn't believe her, because, lawk my lady, what should these forrin creeturs know about skins."

"Did you see him after he left me?"

"Yes, my lady, we could not talk together you know;

but I said, 'I hoped he would lay up,' and he shook my hand very kind like, and smiled very sweet; and I couldn't help saying to myself, 'well, if you take them home with you, your farm, as you call her, aint so much to complain of;' and then I don't know what became of him. But yet somehow, my lady, I've a fancy as he's not much better than the rest of 'em."

"What, did he ever take the slightest liberty with you?"

"With me, indeed! a married man; if he'd dared to do such a thing, I'd have made him remember it."

"Then what do you form your opinion upon?"

"Why, my lady, I'm afraid if I was to tell you, you'd be affronted."

"Ridiculous, why should I be affronted at your doing what I order you to do?"

"Well, really, my lady, I think he worshipped your ladyship; he took care as you should not notice it; but he had not an eye for any thing else when your ladyship was by."

"Well, I suppose that's all, for I never saw the slightest attempt to be familiar."

"No, my lady, there's something else."

"Is there? then let me hear the whole of your story."

"Well, my lady, you know these conducteurs make themselves very busy, and go up into the bedrooms when the luggage is brought down to look whether anything is left behind; and when we was at Cologne, he

brought me down the soap from your ladyship's bedroom and mine; and, certainly, I was glad as they warn't left, for its a nasty mean way they have in these great hotels of making everybody find their own soap, for all they charge so high. Same time, I didn't like the notion of a man going into one's bedroom in that way."

"But we did not sleep at Cologne, Lucy."

"No, my lady, but you washed and dressed before breakfast, and he kept on doing it; and, next morning, for all I thought I'd got every thing, he brought down one of your ladyship's combs, which put me out very much, so the morning after I watched my gentleman, and when I saw him going up I tripped pretty quick after him, and do you know, my lady, I actually found him laying his head down on the pillow just where your ladyship's head had been."

"It's abominably rude of the fellow certainly," said Lady Susan, "but ridiculous also. I am very glad you did not tell me, for I should have discharged him instantly."

"Really, my lady, I gave it him well—an audacious villain—and he seemed very much frightened; and I told him he warn't fit to travel with a handsome lady, and he said, 'pardon, pardon,' for they use our word for that, and he went on his knee and looked so pitiful, that I thought may be it was best not to tell your ladyship, because he was very civil and attentive about other

things, and I thought perhaps we might change for the worse."

"Yes, yes, but now I desire you won't mention this absurd story to anybody."

"Oh, certainly not, my lady."

"I confess I can't understand it; he seemed rather to avoid me and turned his head away from me on all occasions."

"Oh! they're a deceitful set, my lady; I thought this man as dull as an owl; but, when he liked, he came out with such an air that he made them all mind him, and really when he kneeled down to me in the bed-room, and put his hands together, he looked so like the captain in the play that I didn't know what to make of it, I was quite struck like for an instant, but then I thought of his dark complexion and black beard and recollected myself."

Lady Susan felt that the conducteur was nothing to her, and yet the whole tale of the servant gradually spread a feeling of anxiety over her that she could not shake off; she could recollect nothing of the conducteur, and could not ask him any more questions—her maid could tell her no more—his part was played out and there was no likelihood of her seeing the man again, and yet she wished to know more; she had a feeling of extreme uneasiness, and took out Bohun's letter and read it. It did cross her mind "why should not he have delivered this letter to me at Coblenz?" But, on reflection, that



would have been contrary to the system he had laid down, which was to watch her at a distance. There was, however, something of a mystery, and she was deprived of the means of further investigation; and when they reached London she was a good deal depressed, till the train of thought was broken by the busy hum, the various calls on their attention and the necessity of watching the luggage.

On arriving at her father's house she found nobody but a woman in charge of it, but to her great satisfaction she was met by her old friend Skinner, who had given notice of her coming and got two beds prepared with great difficulty, and furnished the house with tea and sugar, a few bottles of wine and other needful things, and had got some fires lighted to give the dull old rooms an appearance of comfort, and make the welcome more agreeable than the old woman would have thought necessary; he also brought the lady twenty-five pounds to prevent her feeling inconvenience in the absence of her father. She could hardly be persuaded to take so much, "but," he said, "he had a draft on the banker sent to him with express orders to put the money into her ladyship's hands, and he would get much blamed if he did not precisely conform to them." She asked after Bohun, of course, and he said, "that he expected he was at Dover, for he had written from Ostend pressing Mrs. Foster to go there to meet him, and she had set off that morning taking her little boy with her."

The next day he paid another visit to see if he could be of any further service, but he knew nothing more about his master ; she made him promise to bring her the address of Bohun at Dover next day, and she commenced a letter in the meantime to thank him for his tender solicitude, and his great, well-judged and timely assistance in the supply of the money ; and expressing the pleasure she felt at their being both in England again after extraordinary difficulties and dangers ; at the same time telling him that she had heard nothing from her father or about him, and begging a letter in reply.

Instead of calling upon Lady Susan next day, according to promise, Skinner forwarded the address, and her letter was posted.

The next morning she rather expected a letter, though of course there was not time to get an answer to hers ; but she was without intelligence, and she passed the day without a visit from Skinner, which made her exceedingly uneasy and dejected, and she passed great part of the succeeding night in tears.

There was no post letter the following morning, and the anxiety of the lady was almost beyond endurance ; but about twelve o'clock Skinner came in, looking very distressed and very anxious ; but he said, “ the account of Mr. Bohun was that day a shade more favourable, the doctors and surgeon permitted them to hope, and they could not say so much yesterday ; and, therefore, though Mr. Bohun could neither speak nor be spoken to, he

would not despair, but had made up his mind to go down to Dover the next night, which was Saturday, in order to see him, and return the following night ; and he had already taken his place in the mail coach."

Lady Susan listened in amazement to all this, it was a thunderclap to her, and when she came to her senses Skinner was terrified at the agony of her distress.

The poor fellow was hardly fitted for the office of comforter to a lady ; but he did his best to re-assure her, and promised better accounts to-morrow, and reminded her of Bohun's high spirit and courage, and his good constitution, and his having his sister to attend him, and the fine air of the sea-side : in short, he rang the changes on every topic of consolation that he could think of, and at last suggested that her ladyship should write to Mrs. Foster herself, which happy thought succeeded in rousing her to some degree of interest, and he took his leave, renewing his promise of further intelligence next morning. The task of writing this letter occupied her mind a long time, for she wrote and burned two or three before she moderated her expressions and feelings to the tone of this epistle :—

" Bosworth House,

" May Fair.

" DEAR MADAM,

" I fear you will wonder at being addressed by one who up to this time has not been happy enough

to make your acquaintance, but who in heart and mind is thoroughly allied to you. Three days ago I wrote a letter to your dear brother, which from the sad accounts I have just received of his present situation, probably now lies by unopened, and that, no less than this, I confide without scruple to your honour. I owe my life to your brother's bravery, and ever since that I have benefited by his advice and assistance beyond what I can at present express; and while I attended him at Maidenthorpe a mutual regard was established between us which has lost nothing of its force since. When I have reposed this confidence in you, dear Madam, you will sympathize in the sufferings I feel in being separated from him at a season like this, when I might make some slight return for his wonderful kindness, by relieving you in your arduous attendance at his bedside. I pray God that he may be well enough for you to mention my wishes to him. I dare not indulge them without his consent, but the fear of acting in opposition to his wish is really the only consideration that has prevented me from joining you before this. Feeling how your time and attention must be too fully occupied, I shall venture to ask no more than that you favour me from day to day with three words, so that I may be certainly informed of the state of my dear Alfred, whose life is more precious to me than my own. From what I have heard him say of you I know that I may rely upon your tenderness and generosity, and I will

trouble you no further, but with my love and best wishes, and you may believe my prayers will not be wanting for the recovery of your dear patient.

“ Believe me, ever yours,  
“ ———.”

The next day's post could not bring her an answer to this ; but Skinner called, and with great delight informed her that the worst was over ; and that, without doubt, the goodness of his constitution would bring him through.

The daily, but brief, bulletins went on favourably from this time forward ; and, at last, she was delighted to receive an enclosure from her lover, expressing his warm gratitude for the tender interest with which she had regarded his sufferings ; his assurance that he was quite in a fair way, and his organs of speech entirely uninjured, and that her dear charming letter was a restorative of great and permanent efficacy.



## CHAPTER XX.

## FORRESTER'S NARRATIVE.

VERY shortly after the receipt of Bohun's letter Lady Susan received a card from Mr. Forrester, requesting her to allow him the honour of an audience the following day : to which she acceded.

After the first greetings Lady Susan said, "As you have been at Ems since I left it, perhaps you have heard something of my father ; he promised to meet Lady Wolfe and me there, and we waited some time in expectation of his arrival, the delay of which made me extremely anxious ; but a circumstance of a very important and disagreeable nature occurred there, which forced me to take flight alone, and I had the good fortune to obtain the assistance of friends and to reach London in perfect safety."

"And, I assure you, I am most happy to see that you are here, and in good health too, apparently, and I hope I may also say in good spirits ; but, according to the story I have heard, you have been exposed to very alarming danger."

"Were you informed of that by Lady Wolfe?"

"No, I only went to Ems because I was so near ; what I heard was from Mr. Hoffmann, at Coblenz, a

very amiable man, to whom Bohun introduced me. The Wolfe and everybody were gone from Ems; but, being so near, I thought I would see the place, but as I did not expect Lord Bosworth, and stayed there only a day, I made no enquiries. Mr. Hoffmann told me you arrived at his house under the guidance of an American traveller named Dreadnought" (Lady Susan produced his card, to the surprise of the narrator), "that you appeared very much discomposed, but more alarmed and insulted than injured. That Mr. H. offered his aid in pecuniary supplies and otherwise; and that you commissioned him to go to Ems, to command the attendance of your maid, and pay expenses there, and obtain your clothes, and so on, which being accomplished he was enabled to dispatch you in a carriage the same night for Cologne, and making but one stage of it on the deck of a vessel then preparing to sail down the Rhine; and he sent a trusty conducteur with you, a Frenchman, who understood German, and he had no doubt of your arriving at Dover in perfect security. The conducteur had not returned when I saw Mr. Hoffmann, but he afterwards showed me a letter signed by you and dated Dover; in which you announced your safety, and that you had received an enclosure of money."

"All that Mr. Hoffmann the banker told you is strictly correct."

"I thought him the most amiable man of business I ever met with, and his conduct to you has been quite

charming; but did you hear no more of Mr. Dreadnought?"

"No; he left me in a towering passion with Prince Kremnitz, and talked of shooting him and so on; but, I believe, that villain has been punished by other means."

"Yes; I heard that he had his pavilion burnt, and was much hurt and disfigured himself, and a great many valuable pictures were destroyed."

"I have heard of this since my arrival in England," said Lady Susan, "but I knew nothing of it before."

"I overtook Lady Wolfe at Ostend," said Mr. Frank, "and she seemed very ill and vexed, and I showed her what attentions I could, notwithstanding her complaints of Lord Bosworth and of your ladyship, to which I paid no attention; and, as I knew the cause of her illness, I asked no questions."

"But I want to hear about your own tour."

"In that case, my lady, I shall spin it out to a thousand and one nights."

"Was it then so full of adventures?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, there were no adventures at all, but only novelties, which, perhaps, would be no novelties to you, though they have implanted many new ideas in my mind, and recollections of much interest."

"Then could you not, my good sir, by carefully selecting the gems and flowers of your narrative, discard the thousand, and show your skill by compressing the inte-



resting tale into the space of one night? After so many days' seclusion it will be a great amusement to me, for, next to the pleasure of telling a long story, is that of listening to one, if well told."

"Ah! but that's a fatal condition."

"What! for an eminent barrister? I won't hear of it; so dine early, as I mean to do, and come and drink tea here at eight."

"I am your slave."

In the evening the tea-things were removed in half-an-hour, and Mr. Frank began his story: —

"My first start was not very pleasant, for in my voyage out I suffered much inconvenience from sickness, and remained shut up in my berth while we were crossing the sea; but, on getting into smooth water in the Scheldt, I was able to join the deck party, and there was addressed by an acquaintance, Alfred Bohun, of our Bar, and an old schoolfellow, whom I did not recognize at first, for he had been cultivating a beard in anticipation of this trip; but he offered me his company on the tour, or rather invited me to join him, and I was conveyed in his carriage; and he made me his guest as long as we travelled together, and I found that he knew German and French, and everything about douaniers and passports, and the whole history of every town that we came to, and all the objects and individuals of note in it, so that he was quite a benefactor to me. And, moreover, I saw a good deal of the manners of the people,

for he made his tour partly as a matter of business on behalf of the great London merchant Mr. Hargrave, to look into accounts and make enquiries and give directions about commercial arrangements. You must know that this Hargrave is *a real* millionaire, and all his correspondents seemed to regard his connexion in business as an inevitable source of profit, and therefore of great importance to them, so that they performed 'kow tow' with all proper devotion to Bohun as his illustrious representative, and his company and mine, as his friend, were regarded as a favour.

"Well, in general, these parties were dull enough to me, because I understood little but their greetings and toasts, among which of course the health of Mr. Hargrave was drunk on all occasions with great zest, but still I certainly derived great advantage from my companion, because every door was open and every sight free to us, so that I was better instructed and learnt more than most travellers, owing to being with Bohun, beside travelling at his expense, or, perhaps, the expense of Mr. Hargrave.

"As I told you before, my friend not only spoke and wrote German and French like a native, but had besides read up all their histories. I presume that you also have been over those fine interesting old cities of the Netherlands; but I think I may presume to say, that you would be much more illumined by a visit with him than you can have been by the parrot-like com-

missionnaire that dodges you at the doors of the hotels. After surveying these we took the towns on the Rhine, and Frankfort and Heidelberg, and made our way south without stopping at any of the watering places; but it was part of Bohun's business to look at the great manufacturing district about Mulhausen, and he seemed much struck by the extent and excellence of its productions.

“Ultimately we arrived at Basle, at which place I may say that the pleasure of my trip suffered a sad interruption, for after we had supped and were going to bed, my companion struck me quite aghast by informing me that an important reason had occurred to him for turning back, and that next morning we must travel in opposite directions. Of course it was in vain for me to remonstrate, but after hearing how extremely useful he was as a highly-informed and instructive companion, beside being uniformly cheerful and agreeable, you may perhaps conceive the despondency I felt at our separation.

I would much rather have turned back with him, even from the margin of Switzerland, but as that would evidently have been contrary to his wish, I took my departure for Berne by the diligence next morning, by way of commencing my Swiss tour, which, solitary as I then felt, had quite the appearance of ‘a task.’

“However, as I rode along in the coupé of the diligence, the fresh and bracing air of Switzerland, and

the charming scenery that I saw, even in that comparatively level route, inspired me with fresh spirits and ardour for the undertaking to traverse the noble rampart of mountains which I beheld in the distance, and by the time I arrived at the capital of the canton I was fully nerved for the tour that Bohun had sketched out for me as a last kindness."

"Then you saw no more of him."

"Oh, yes, a little more; but you must wait the sequel of my story, if you please.

"In order to help out my itinerary, I have brought with me Brockedon's 'Passes of the Alps,' with my route marked upon his map, and also for the benefit of his assistance in describing it, for it is beyond the scope of my eloquence to give that sort of graphic description which might interest you. In fact, it appears to me not very practicable to excite due emotion by description. When you see these countries your soul is penetrated with various emotions corresponding to the features of grandeur, sublimity, peculiarity and graceful beauty they by turns exhibit, but my feeble description of glaciers, torrents, waterfalls, precipices of many thousand feet high, and lakes of immense expanse or delicious tranquil beauty, would be useless to you, and would cause me the pain one suffers from an abortive attempt. Still, though I am unable to describe, I assure you I was not wanting in admiration and all proper feeling, but, alas! how many times did it cause me a sigh to think how my

delight would have been enhanced by having Bohun for my companion.

“I became a pedestrian tourist, and, with a man to carry my wallet, which was no great load, was always early a-foot, and after dinner often renewed my journey till dark, and in the course of a short time, by practice in climbing and descending precipices, got so hardy, active and venturesome that it made me quite vain. I met many countrymen of course, and many United States travellers also; I was, however, always very much on my guard as to becoming sociable, but at Schaffhausen I struck up an acquaintance with an ingenious French artist, who was, and had been, sketching throughout Switzerland. After travelling a good deal in his company, I agreed to go along with him in his pilgrimage to Munich, to study the noble collections of sculpture and paintings there, and was much the better for his escort, and enlightened by his professional knowledge, in judging of and even in admiring the great and numerous works of art assembled at that capital.

“From thence I went by Augsburg, and Nuremburg, and Wurtzburg, and made a second visit to Frankfort, and was very much gratified by the view of these old cities, which flourished so wonderfully in the middle ages, when, owing to the imperfect state of navigation, the great road of commerce from the East by the Italian ports, to the north of Europe, was through them. It

was, however, pleasing to see them, even at present, in a very flourishing state, and to find that their ecclesiastical and public edifices have not suffered materially in the various wars that have desolated Europe since that time, in fact, to find them bearing the aspect of two or three centuries back. Now, you must not expect from me a description of these places, or the route, because it is much better given in guide books and gazetteers of easy access ; but if you ever have an opportunity of making a survey of them I advise you by no means to neglect it.

“ At Dover I met with a little adventure.”

“ Oh ! come, I am delighted with the prospect of an adventure.”

“ I acknowledge,” said Frank, “ that my story needs something to enliven it ; but I can only tell you that when I landed on to the pier, with the other passengers, there was a lady sitting with a gentleman apparently very ill and weak leaning on her shoulder and asleep ; I looked rather attentively at the group, not merely because she was very handsome, but because the features seemed in a manner familiar to me ; and as we were passing, she called ‘ Alfred,’ to a fine little boy at her feet, who seemed disposed to join the cavalcade which went forward towards the Custom House ; but it came across my mind, partly owing to the shadowy resemblance and partly to the name, that the group had some connexion with Bohun ; and, at a convenient opportunity, I cut loose from the convoy, and making a *détour*, reached the

party I had noticed on the pier, just as they were in the act of leaving it ; and, lo ! the poor invalid was Bohun. I was very much affected at the change in him ; but he and his sister, Mrs. Foster, assured me, ‘ that all danger was then passed, though he was still very weak and could not walk without support.’ Bohun had feigned sleep, because he did not wish to catch the eye of Lady Wolfe. I found his illness was occasioned by two wounds, one in the neck, the other on the breast, which he had neglected in his hurry to get back to England, till they were nearly in a state of mortification ; but he would not let out a word about the cause or nature of his wounds, and I found his sister was under strict injunction not to disclose any knowledge she had on the subject.

“ I stopped at Dover two days, till I was convinced by my own observation of his progress in recovery, and of the perfect revival of his appetite, and that he was well found, as the sailors say, in everything of a nourishing and restorative character. When I came to London, which was by mail two nights ago, it was under a positive engagement to go as soon as I could to the counting-house of Mr. Hargrave to report all I had seen ; and, accordingly, next day, beside calling on you, I attended there and sent in my card as from Mr. Bohun at Dover, and to the astonishment of the clerks was admitted immediately. The old gentleman seemed so delighted with my news that it made me love him, and when he found

I had made part of my tour in company with Bohun he asked me to dine at his house in Grosvenor Square, tête à tête, in order that I might pour out the whole of my budget about my companion. The dinner was exquisite, but my host partook of it much more sparingly than I did. The wines too! oh! what a thing to be a millionaire! There was mediæval hock, and port bottled about the time of the American War or the French Revolution. Only imagine, now, after an absence of two months, that I should renew my acquaintance with port under such delightful auspices. It was not merely the gusto, but glass after glass seemed to smooth down the corrugated state of my interior, produced by the long-continued action of the sour stuff I had been dosed with at the hotels on the Continent."

"Fie, you are a gourmand," said Lady Susan, laughing.

"No, I took it medicinally; and the old gentleman seemed to sympathize with my enjoyment, and to take an interest in my appreciation of his wine. *He* did not require a continuous narrative; but asked me a hundred questions about the places I saw, and the people I was introduced to, and took especial interest in a little affair at Frankfort, about which he had by some means or other previously got an inkling."

"Oh! ho! then you had an adventure, and with a lady, I presume; am I to congratulate you on your success?"



“Why, really, I meant not to tell you a word about this ; indeed, I promised never to mention it.”

“Well, never mind, I will make you a like promise, and you know women are much more faithful to their word than men ; beside, you might surely trust me with the history of your conquest after your confidence in Mr. Hargrave.”

“Why, if it had been my conquest I should have been too proud to make a secret of my success.”

“Then,” said her ladyship, looking rather pale, “Mr. Bohun gained the lady?”

“Not so, either: I find the only way is to tell you the whole story, but then you must be entirely secret. You must know then that about four years ago Bohun had a complicated and important commission which led him to various parts of the Continent, I mean France, Germany and Italy, and he succeeded finally in the object of it, after great exertion and danger, and, as I believe, the display of wonderful address and presence of mind under very trying circumstances. During this time he was once or twice concealed for a short period in the house of Mr. Bunsen, at Frankfort, whose only daughter was at that time a girl of thirteen or fourteen. On these occasions he amused this lass with various fancies, and at the same time made himself very entertaining and agreeable in the family, but regarding Mademoiselle simply as an amiable nice little girl. He danced and romped and sang with her, and gave her instruction in music, for it

turns out that he is a proficient in that art, which is much more esteemed on the Continent than with us.

“ From what passed, and what I heard at the time of our visit, I think the child, which she really was when Bohun was there before, imbibed then a romantic affection for him, which grew with her growth, notwithstanding their entire separation, and she studied the English language with the most earnest assiduity, and as it appeared to me very successfully, in the hope that some day or other Bohun might arrive at Frankfort and find her in all respects to his liking, and, consequently, owing to the wealth of her father, by no means ineligible as a wife. Figure to yourself the rapture with which this poor girl heard of the arrival of Bohun at Frankfort, and next to that the announcement of her father that he had fixed the day for his dining at their house. I was ignorant of all this till after the party, but I thought the meeting very cordial, though there was no kissing except on the part of the old gentleman.

“ During our dinner Bohun, who, as I told you before, had a practical object in this journey, conversed chiefly with the father and in German, so that I had the young lady to myself, and I did my best to entertain her, and occasionally made her laugh, though upon the whole I thought her rather indifferent, but she was apparently very amiable and naturally genteel. Well, there is an end of all things in time, even a German dinner, so after coffee, music became the order of the day, and the young

lady sang to us, and then Bohun was drawn in for a duet, and he blushed a little as he made me promise not to betray his having been guilty of this levity; however, the lady was the chief songstress, and it appeared that she had got over from England and learned all the songs which she had heard him sing at the time of their meeting before, and he chiefly strove to make her sing these rather than come out himself; but, at last, she produced one which she said was exclusively adapted for a man's voice, and finally Bohun was forced to sing it, and, though I am no great enthusiast about music, I could not help being delighted with this in my modest way, but the young lady and her papa were transported; in fact, the first was moved even to tears. Now, you must know, that soon after the music began, I was thoroughly convinced that this poor girl's heart was gone; everything was for Bohun, his praise was more delicious than all music, and it was evident to me that her taste, and skill, and expression, and tenderness, were all developed for the sole object of rendering Bohun kind, pleased and attentive. These Germans are really fond of music, and we were detained in the house till a late hour, but when the parting came at last, the poor girl's face told plainly enough the state of her affections.

“When we got into the street, Bohun renewed his injunction that I should tell nothing of this musical display; ‘that’s a mighty small secret,’ said I, ‘compared

with the love story to which the music is only an appendage.' 'Heavens!' he said, 'did you perceive that the poor girl was so foolish? I own that the symptoms of her weakness struck me; but I was not aware of their being manifest to others.' This led to further conversation, and he then communicated to me some particulars of his former journey; and, finally, we determined to be off early in the morning, as he said, 'he would neither settle at Frankfort, nor bring a German wife home to England, however highly he thought of the young lady.'

"The next morning we had nearly breakfasted, when in walked our host of the preceding day, and he began to talk to my companion in German, not a word of which could I comprehend, wherefore I went out to look after the baggage and get the carriage ready, but on my return a sad scene met my eyes, the poor old gentleman weeping as if his heart would break, and Bohun pale and evidently suffering deeply. To tell you the truth, I guessed what was the matter, and went and shook the poor old man's hand, but he was not to be comforted, and we could only terminate the scene by turning our backs on Frankfort. I then found that the poor girl had disclosed the state of her affections to her father, and convinced him that not only her happiness, but perhaps her life, depended on his forming this alliance for her. Wherefore the old gentleman, having regard to my friend's business talents, and his high

standing with the great mercantile autocrat in London, and also I suppose, to his character and agreeable manners, offered Bohun half his business, which was equal to six thousand a year, and which Bohun could have doubled; furthermore, no less than half his fortune, which was some unspeakable number of thalers, together with the fair hand of his amiable daughter.

“Now was not this a provoking prank of the mischievous little god. I told Bohun how readily I should have accepted the terms, if the old gentleman had had a commission to me, and bullied him for his folly and obduracy; upon which he recommended me to qualify for the chance by studying German and arithmetic (two incidents in the case I had not before adverted to), and he promised me after that the aid of an introduction from Mr. Hargrave. Alas! I have not inured myself to study, and these are two very hard nuts to crack; my arithmetic extends only to the rule of subtraction, which I practise so successfully as to reduce my dividend to zero before the end of every quarter, and as to languages, I could never wean myself of the predilection for my native tongue, which made even Latin and Greek extremely odious to me.

“Well, when I visited Frankfort on my return I put myself in the way of the old gentleman, to pick up what news I could of the family affairs, for once or twice it crossed my mind that the short turn to the right about which my learned friend made at Basle

might have been caused by repentance, and that by the grace of God and my persistent condemnation of his conduct, he had been brought to a sane view of the affair, and had resolved to clasp the bird in the hand, instead of aiming at the glittering prizes seen dimly in perspective through the thorny bush of the law. But it was not so, he had gone to Ems, and appeared in the society there as a German under the name of König; this I heard of at Frankfort, first from Hoffmann, and Lady Seraphina confirmed it, and said that you and she were completely taken in, and met him frequently, and were introduced to him in his German character, and that you all got tolerably familiar, talking always in the French language, which he spoke perfectly.

“ Well, to return to my story, poor Mr. Bunsen told me, that in order to divert his daughter, and prevent her from dwelling on her disappointment, he had taken her a little tour to the watering places, and he thought by the hurry of change he had produced some effect, when, towards the end of this, he heard of an amateur theatrical performance at Ems by the officers of a regiment quartered at Ehrenbreitstein, and to this he determined to take her, and, having secured seats at a great premium, it most unfortunately fell out that Bohun performed the principal character in the piece. Mademoiselle had taken great interest in the play, and most particularly in this leading character, which they say was performed to admiration; in fact, she was so ab-

sorbed in the actor that she did not recognize the man, but when, at the end, the performers were called on the stage, and she saw him without his cap, and simply in the natural character of his face, and heard the true tone of his voice in thanking the audience for their reception of the piece, she knew him at once, and shrieked and fainted. The old gentleman was taken up with *her*, and not understanding the case at the time, lost sight of Bohun, whom he could not afterwards find, for next morning he heard that he was off at four o'clock, and the people at the hotel could tell nothing of his route or destination. The old gentleman then thought that he purposely avoided poor Carlotta and himself; and, at the time of my visit, all was dejection and even alarm for the health of his daughter; of course I could give him nothing but sympathy, and then I made my way to Ems, and, beside my agitation and alarm about this sad event, had the bad luck to be too late for everything."

"Now, pray tell me a little about the conduct of Bohun at Ems; as for Lady Seraphina, she was piqued and mortified, and it appeared to me that I got nothing from her but envy, malice and falsehood."

"Well, perhaps, you are right in that judgment."

"But your story is not finished, you did not tell me what Mr. Bohun's patron said of this affair."

"Oh! he was entirely in favour of Bohun, actually applauded his conduct, and said, 'that he would be a

greater man here than they could ever have made him at Frankfort.’”

“Then I think, Mr. Frank, that decision ought to silence you and me, however we may lament the fate of the deserted young lady. Lady Wolfe and I were in the box with Prince Kremnitz, and *he* knew Bohun, and first named him after the performance. Previously to that Bohun had associated a little with us, but chiefly with the Germans, and particularly with one old Baroness Coire, who was angry if she ever lost sight of him, and it was through her pressing intercession that he was prevailed on to act; and, in that respect, I suppose Lady Seraphina did not fail to do him justice, for at the time she was in ecstasies with the character and the man. Prince Kremnitz, however, satisfied her he was a depraved debauchee, and she had no doubt in the world that he took flight from dread of the exposure which the prince was prepared to make, and she seemed very angry that she had not seen through his German disguise.”

“But, pray tell me now, what was this frightful account that the prince gave of Bohun?”

“Oh! that he was of the lowest origin, a kind of tramp through the theatres and gambling houses of Germany, and that two or three years ago he had been employed to detect a gang of thieves or forgers, in which for the sake of a large reward he had shown activity and cleverness; and that the bankers, for their own pur-



poses, got the fellow admitted for the time into high society, because he had to track the culprits or their accomplices in these frauds through all grades. He admitted that his mean origin was concealed by good address and good manners, and that he danced and sang well, but said that the fellow got so puffed up with the encouragement he met with, that he had the audacity to make love to women of the highest rank, and he was sorry to say that his insolent daring met with unimaginal success; but that finally, he had made his escape from Vienna in disguise, because he had not courage to respond to the challenge of an injured nobleman, whose unfortunate wife had been the prey of his artifice and fascination."

"Upon my word," said Forrester, laughing, "this is a very serious affair, a great many counts in the indictment; but I venture any wager that the grand jury will ignore the bill. You don't understand my jargon, but the interpretation thereof is, that there are some few grains of truth mixed up with a mountain of fiction."

"It is possible," said the lady, "that the charges may not be wholly true, but how should you, my good sir, know anything of the matter?"

"Ah! but I do know something bearing very much on the case, but that shall secure me another visit, for I won't launch into any fresh matter; and besides, my lady, you look fatigued, therefore, when may I be permitted to repeat my visit?"

“Why, to-morrow morning, if you please ; but don’t spend the night in inventing a deceptive tale.”

“No, I will give you an honest story and bespeak an honest verdict.”

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When they met the next morning he brought very favourable accounts of the progress of his friend, and found the lady better and more lively than she seemed the previous night. Having received her command to proceed with his narrative, he said, “There was one other little incident in our travels that I passed by before, because it seemed to have no particular significance ; but I will now narrate it, and you may yourself judge of a few facts which appear to me not to square exactly with the list of charges against Bohun. In our journey up the Rhine we stopped at Coblenz, and were just returning from a visit to the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, when on our road near the barracks at the foot of the mountain we met a man having a military air, with his face much scarred and wanting an arm, and between this person and Bohun a recognition took place, and the meeting was very cordial, and Bohun invited him to dine at the table d’hôte as our guest ; after which we rode out together, and in the evening champagne and cigars were introduced, and our visitor took his full share of the wine and was very joyous and gave toasts pregnant as it

appeared with meaning, and though I was called upon to drink them, it was only in one or two instances that I could prevail upon Bohun to give me a translation. These toasts, however, had reference to some of the doings of Bohun at Vienna, during his visit some years back, and before we separated the stranger induced Bohun to promise to visit him at the château of Prince Kremnitz, where he filled the post of seneschal, the scene of your ladyship's adventure. Now, Bohun expressed a violent reluctance to this at first, and it was with great difficulty that his consent was obtained, but as he wanted to see Stolzanfels, and this was only two or three miles further up the river, and the seneschal promised to provide for our crossing it, the invitation was at last accepted.

“The next day we arrived about the time fixed and crossed the Rhine, and were admitted through a small gate in a wall which was the boundary of the domain towards the river, and we walked upwards straight along a very clear path through the wood, which, however, after a short distance bent to the right, while there was another path considerably overgrown which went directly forward, and Bohun, from some odd fancy, determined to go by that, as he found it went to the same point, notwithstanding our host told him it was along the side of a precipice and extremely dangerous, and that there was a bridge across a ravine which was out of repair, and that he must not think of it; but all the arguments were

vain, for Bohun set off having a promise from the seneschal to take care of the dog, and to meet him at the upper end of the path. The dog, I should tell you, was a noble bloodhound, one of the finest animals you ever saw, and he appeared not a little pleased with our admiration of him, but woe to the man who gets into his clutches! for he seemed to have the power of a tiger. We walked on pretty fast, for I was eager to see the sequel of the adventure, and after climbing the hill by an easy winding ascent arrived at a very fine terrace, from which the Rhine was seen to great advantage in the distance. At one end of this was a sort of pavilion, the necessary opening of which appeared to annoy the seneschal very much; but after passing through what appeared to be a sitting-room and bed-room, of which the shutters were closed, he opened a sliding panel, which admitted us to a winding stair in a circular tower, connected to the angle of the building. At the bottom of this stair was a ruinous postern door, and on opening it there stood Bohun, and certainly the sight of him gave me great delight, and no small degree of wonder, for a more mad exploit I never knew. The rugged path in many places was not above a foot wide, and the horrid broken down bridge which he was obliged to cross seemed as frightful as that by which Mahomet tests the faith of his believers in the next world. The seneschal slipped the rusty bolt back into its socket, which, but for the imprudent daring of Bohun, I should have thought a very unnecessary

safeguard ; but, after all, the old door was not much protection, for the wood was rotten.

“ On our return, we were led rather quickly through the rooms, for it was evidently a part of the domain which the seneschal was not authorized to show. Well, after that, I thought that Bohun rather acted a part, he seemed so over-delighted with everything that he saw, and praised the château and grounds as a scene of enchantment.

“ We had some wine, but Bohun was on his guard and would drink little ; and on our way back to the boat, in passing the pavilion before described, he took an opportunity of saying, ‘ that he supposed that in that place of retirement the great minister made his calculations in quiet, and thought over important measures of state relative to the government of the country, and political arrangements and relations with other powers.’ The seneschal laughed at this, which indeed was an artful suggestion of Bohun to draw him out ; and, by that means, we learnt, that this most moral prince, who had been shocking your ears with accusations of Bohun, was himself a monster of sensuality and base and cruel propensities, so that, instead of this charming retreat being the scene of the meditations of a statesman, it was devoted to the orgies of a depraved voluptuary. The seneschal communicated the true character of the place to Bohun, who translated the tale to me when we were alone.

“The seneschal accompanied us, not only to the exterior wall, but walked with us to the ferry, some distance higher up the river, and Bohun and he parted as warm friends.

“We regained our carriage, which was waiting on the opposite side, and for some distance I found my friend reluctant to talk; but after travelling a mile or so he suddenly laughed out, and continued a sort of chuckle some time, before he would explain to me the cause; by degrees I found that he had been most desirous of seeing the interior of this place, but could not devise any scheme for it, until the moment he saw our new friend, upon which he instantly determined on the plan of operations which I had seen carried into effect so successfully.”

“Yes; but with a great deal of needless hazard.”

“That was the taste of my companion; but I did not take part in his risk on this or on other occasions; for instance, he went to the top of the cathedral at Strasburg, the steps of ascent being outside the spire, and he said, ‘that he was in the habit of doing things of this sort to keep his nerves in order;’ one of his favourite amusements is pistol firing, and he is so quick and accurate now, that he raises the pistol and hits the bull’s eye before you could imagine it possible to take aim.

“Since my Swiss tour, I feel that I too could now walk up the path along that precipice, but I should not volunteer the thing in the way that Bohun did. By the

bye, he could not otherwise have satisfied his curiosity about this place, which was his main object in the excursion; and in the progress of our journey he told me, that a lady, with whom he was on terms of peculiar intimacy, when he was at Vienna, had described that place to him as a den of horrors, and that she had been one of the victims of the brutality of this wretch; and that her husband had submitted to the ignominy of it, and been rewarded by titles of honour, and pensions, and things that the paltry wretch was mean enough to be vain of, though they were the badges of his dishonour. This made him take an interest in this detestable place, and it seemed to kindle afresh his wrath against the domineering possessor of it."

"But, my good sir, does not this confirm the account of Prince Kremnitz?"

"Perhaps so, in a slight degree. I should be very much pleased to think it; for I had rather despised Bohun on account of his indifference to the fair sex. I hate that coldness of character; it seemed to me, that if he had been what a man ought to be, he never would have deserted that poor girl at Frankfort; but perhaps he had some bitter lesson at Vienna, and is on his guard."

"Did you hear any thing more about Vienna?"

"No; but sundry unconnected remarks made me sure that a deadly hostility existed between the prince and Bohun, and, therefore, I insist that the evidence of an

unprincipled villain ought not to weigh against the fair fame of my high-minded honourable Bohun."

"You speak with great warmth in his favour; have you been long acquainted with him?"

"I was at Eton with him, and he was universally liked and looked up to there; and certainly I ought to speak well of him, for he saved my life."

"Indeed! pray tell me the particulars of that important service to the human race."

"Why, you see, I was out of bounds in Windsor, and one of the masters caught sight of me and pursued me down the lane on that side of the Thames, and he reckoned he had bagged me; but I thought I could swim across to the play fields, and took to the water: some of the fellows on the other side cheered me heartily as I swam, but Bohun, who had come up, thought there was danger of my not managing to cross the current, which happened to be very strong, and he ran some distance down the bank of the river, stripped himself as quick as thought, and took the water just at the right place to catch me, as the stream was bearing me down quite exhausted; and it was with a good deal of difficulty that the fellows got us out, for I was a drag on him."

"Upon my word that was a friend in need."

"Yes, there were many fellows that would have jumped in after me; but, you see, it was so clever of Bohun to run down, and get his clothes off and take the water just at the right spot."



"Aye, very clear and very brave ; you certainly have good reason to remember him."

"No doubt ; but you will, perhaps, be very angry with me when I tell you, that I have always remembered Bohun more on account of a fight he had at Eton than for his important assistance to me."

"Remember a boys' fight : how ridiculous ; what, did he give his opponent a bloody nose ?"

"I must not tell you the story of the fray, or you would think it anything but a joke I assure you."

"Indeed ; well, now that makes me desirous to hear this school-boy tragedy of two lads buffeting one another."

"Then don't blame me afterwards for distressing your feelings."

"You need hardly anticipate that, I think : so begin your tale ; but I must have it without embellishments."

"I will be faithful and accurate as Froissart in describing a tournament. The thing began by Bohun interfering to beg off a poor little fellow that Westcliff was punishing savagely for some trifling offence."

"What, do you mean Lord Westcliff ?"

"Certainly."

"And don't you know that he is an admirer of mine ?"

"Oh ! then I must not go on, for the battle was sorely against him."

"Pray don't stop for that, my nerves will not be shocked through any sympathy with him."

“ Well then, the quarrel began on the occasion above stated, by his lordship’s wrath being diverted against Bohun, and he gave him a blow on the head which the other immediately returned with interest. One of the masters was near, and as it was the very day of going home for Midsummer holidays, he took good care the quarrel should go no farther at that time ; but Westcliff promised Bohun a payment in full after we returned, and the other, knowing his vindictive disposition, made sure of his bearing it in mind, and in order to prepare himself for the conflict got his father, or somebody, to secure him some instruction from Mr. Jackson, the professor of the manly science of boxing, and as he laboured hard and had a very quick eye and great agility and courage, he came back to Eton much better prepared for the day of reckoning. This was not long of coming, for Westcliff, taking offence in some trifling dispute at cricket, said, ‘ Oh ! I owe you a licking,’ and gave Bohun a smart facer before he had expected anything of the sort, but, to the astonishment of every one, he recovered himself in a moment and knocked my lord down. ‘ There you bully,’ said he, ‘ take that, and I am ready to fight you this instant, and will give you plenty more of it.’ I was not close by, but seeing a row and hearing of a fight and who were the combatants, I ran and got up a tree just by the place where the ring is always made, and really when they stripped—”

“ Stripped,” said the lady, “ what do you mean ?”

“Why, of course, at a regular fight they take off their coat, waistcoat and shirt.”

The lady turned rather pale.

“Well, I was going on to say that when I saw them out of their clothes the superior bulk of Westcliff, who was two years older than Bohun, and his fierce looks, made my heart sink within me; for my friend, being entirely without fat, looked delicate and slight, but, in fact, he was in much better preparation for severe exertion than Westcliff. When they were brought up to the line a little sparring took place, but at length Westcliff aimed the first blow, which Bohun evaded, and then darting in with the whole weight of his body he struck Westcliff such a blow, just between the eyes, that he knocked him down rather stupefied. Well, after this, by the advice of his second, Westcliff got to close quarters always when he could, and in this his superior size and strength gave him advantage, but, whenever there was a chance, Bohun was sure to come in with a telling blow on the face, which added more or less to the simmer which was going on in his lordship's head; beside this, owing to being out of condition, he lost his wind, and when that is the case the strength fails also, and Bohun went on fighting at the head, for he could not make much impression on the bulky frame of his adversary; but still the battle lingered, and on both sides became rather fainter, when, after one of the rounds, Westcliff being directed, and I think pushed also, by his

second, made a violent rush at Bohun, and overbearing everything they came to the ground together with great force, but Bohun undermost, and, in the shock, his right collar-bone was broken, and the consequence was that when they were brought up to the line again his arm hung down useless by his side. My lord's backers gave a great shout at this and he was advised to renew the attempt, but Bohun, who was keenly on the watch, slipped on one side on this occasion and cleared him, and was prepared, as the other was recovering from his failure, to plant such a blow on the side of the head as floored his lordship and decided the battle, for when time was called, your admirer my lady, was not able to stand."

"I confess I could not stop your recital," said Lady Susan, "though I have listened to it with great horror, and am much shocked; but you must excuse my saying you must have a very hard heart, not to have blotted such a scene as this out of your memory."

"Nay, it is precisely because I suffered so much during the battle, owing to the deep interest I took in the fate of my dear Bohun, that it made that vivid impression on my mind."

"But pray," said the lady, with tears in her eyes, "never let me hear an allusion to this painful story."

"Oh, but you must hear the end of it."

"No more blows and blood, for heaven's sake!"

"No; when the result was declared, there was a

great and general shout, when Bohun, stepping forward, waved his left hand, as if wanting to address them, which was understood. 'Stop,' he said, 'silence; Westcliff has fought bravely and well, and it is cruel to wound his feelings.' "

The lady could not smother her feelings any longer, and her tears gushed forth, but she regained her composure as quickly as she could.

After a pause, Forrester said, " Well, I think you will remember Bohun now."

" Yes, indeed, ' while memory holds her seat.' But I hope you will excuse my putting an end to this interview, for I have other things to attend to; among the rest, to write to my aunt."

" But I suppose I may call again to-morrow.

" No, I cannot allow myself the pleasure of seeing you again; your visits would appear to be too frequent. I hope and trust my father will be at home in a day or two; you had better not call here again till after his return."

" A sentence of banishment," he said, as he left the room.

When Lady Susan knew that the house-door had closed upon him, she burst into an agony of tears, which afforded a salutary relief.

Before she had recovered her composure a sharp knock announced a post letter, and it turned out to be

from Coblenz, in reply to hers, and the contents of the letter was as follows:—

“VERY DEAR MILADY,

“I am honoured much by the receipt of your letter, which made Mrs. Hoffmann and me very happy by the news it brings that you are at home and well; and this I was much displeased at not hearing before, according to the promise of your conducteur. In reply to your enquiry, I beg to tell you that another person the money you allude to provided, so that you are not at all to me indebted, but Mrs. Hoffmann and I have quite solemnly promised not to give up his name, which is much regret to both of us; but in fact it would not be safe to do so, for the danger of that adventure being known here is great both to him and to me, &c. &c. &c.

“J. H.”

This letter appeared at first to complicate the case; as, however, she by degrees became calmer, she applied herself to the arrangement of this chaos, and not the less readily because many things which she had now learned seemed with more certainty to connect her lover with her own history, and by degrees the following facts fell into their proper sequence.

Bohun had seen her in the box with Prince Kremnitz at the Ems theatre, and he might, through the German

baroness or some other channel, have acquired a knowledge of the intended visit to Belle Vue, and he was apprized of the frightful danger it exposed her to. He disappeared from Ems many hours before she left it, which afforded time for the entire transformation which, aided by the vulgar and unpleasing nasal tones of his voice, had disguised him effectually even from her; he had exhibited a perfect knowledge of the locality, which Frank Forrester's tale accounted for, and had undertaken a desperate enterprize for her rescue, which none but a deeply-interested person would have thought it worth while to hazard, even if they had not been wanting in the boldness and determination it required; she concluded that he had been severely wounded in the throat in an encounter with the dog described by Forrester, before she saw him, and wondered how he could possibly have got the better of the formidable brute. She comprehended now the burst of feeling in her brave and hardy deliverer as soon as he had placed her in safety, which before she could not imagine an adequate cause for. The patch of blood which she had seen on the ground, when he rose after this paroxysm, was evidently the result of some wounds in his neck by the dog. When they parted he had dared to kiss her hand, in a manner that seemed altogether inconsistent with the previous roughness of his behaviour; and the mystery of this was now solved, and though for some time she lingered over the impossibility

of her mistaking one so dear to her for an entire stranger, and though she could hardly get over the immense contrast between the graceful, elegant man she had seen the night before, admired of all, and the uncouth being of the morning, whose recklessness of circumstances and rank, however valuable for the occasion, seemed to belong to a character of an entirely opposite stamp; yet, in conclusion, it came thoroughly home to her conviction that her lover Bohun had been in fact the "Dreadnought" American hero to whom she owed her deliverance.

After this first victory over the trust in her own penetration, his subsequent metamorphosis into the courier easily forced itself on her belief, and she reverted to the betrayal of his love for her by the incidents in her bed room noticed by her maid, his resemblance to the actor, and the discovery of his wounded neck, and by the bite of a dog; the betrayal also of severe illness which made him write from Ostend for his sister to meet him at Dover. All these circumstances passed rapidly through her mind, and completed her conviction that no other person had had a share in her deliverance, and she thought with agony of his frightful contest with the dog, and was amazed that wounded as he was he should be able to carry through this desperate enterprize with judgment, coolness and celerity of action, suited to every emergency that arose in the course of it; and though, on one hand, this reflection gave great pain to her heart, yet, on the other, what a glorious sentiment it was, that



her rescue from a horrible destiny, and restoration to her own country in safety, purity, and the blessed enjoyment of self-esteem, were entirely due to that one man on whom she had before bestowed her affections. His enterprise, conceived in the truest sense of honour and delicacy, confirmed her idea of the nobleness of his character, and its skilful and heroic achievement inspired her with that admiration of him which is the feeling most to be coveted by a lover.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

MR. HARGRAVE.

ON the afternoon of this day Mr. Hargrave called in his way out of the city, and left a note to say that he would call on Lady Susan about the same hour next day.

When the time arrived and the gentleman was introduced to her ladyship, he said that he waited upon her in consequence of a letter he had received the day before from Mr. Hoffmann of Coblenz, marked "strictly private," which related to two subjects; the first was, that the Prince of Kremnitz was getting well, though his face resembled a piece of mosaic, and was most anxious to find out who the person was that *had shot* and severely wounded him, besides burning his pavilion, which contained pictures of enormous value; that he had offered a very great reward for the apprehension of this party, and that if he got hold of him the worst fate would inevitably befall him. The second matter was, that he inclosed a bill for one hundred pounds drawn by Mr. Bohun on Mr. Hargrave, for which Mr. Hoffmann had advanced the money, and which, under all circumstances, he, Mr. Hoffmann, thought it better not to negotiate through any usual channel for fear of

its suggesting the instrumentality of Bohun in the rescue, and he arranged for me to pay him the amount of the note by another mode ; and I understood that this money was obtained for the purpose of conveying your ladyship to England.

“ I dare say that is the case ; I never knew where the money came from, but this accounts for it ; but, alas ! my dear sir, I am entirely unable to pay these hundred pounds, my stock of money is reduced below ten pounds, and my father is away, and I know no friend from whom I should have a chance of obtaining it.”

Mr. Hargrave smiled, and said, “ you anticipate danger where none is to be feared ; in fact, no liability attaches to you in the matter. I merely desired to put the note into your hands, so that you may, if you please, destroy it by putting it into that fire, or you may write and send the note to Mr. Bohun, and tell him, that though I cannot, like him, take part in a perilous and heroic enterprise for the rescue of a lady in distress, I shall take the financial branch of the exploit on myself.”

Lady Susan could hardly find words to express her amazement and gratitude ; in fact, her feelings overpowered her in the attempt to do so.

Mr. Hargrave was greatly moved himself, and felt much exalted by his share in the knight errantry ; but, after a slight pause, he went on to remark, “ that she had mentioned her scanty funds, and in order that she might suffer no further inconvenience on that score, he

begged her acceptance of two twenty pound notes which he happened to have in his pocket book, and at the same time desired her to consider that, under the circumstances of her being inconvenienced by any pecuniary difficulty, he would always feel extreme pleasure in removing it, and begged she would honour him by her confidence on any such occasion, and give him the pleasure of being serviceable to her." He then, before leaving her, pointed out the necessity of strict silence on the subject of Bohun, as he said, "that the vehement character of Prince Kremnitz would make him endeavour to claim her deliverer as a public criminal if he knew who he was, or, failing that, to inflict some personal revenge upon him in this country."

The termination of this scene was most affectionate on both sides.

This interview was a great relief to her, and it filled her with gratitude to Mr. Hargrave, whom she henceforward regarded in the light of a parent, for his generosity to her reminded her of what he had done for Bohun about the period of their first acquaintance; and this second instance of his liberality made her regard him as the most benevolent person she had ever known.

She sat up late that evening to write fully to Bohun about her discovery, and about Mr. Hargrave, and enclosed the hundred pound bill which that gentleman had paid the money for and cancelled, and expressed in the warmest terms the affectionate gratitude she was

penetrated with, and also the wonder with which the unlimited talent and bravery of her lover had inspired her, a sentiment she said which would be as lasting in her heart as any other that had ever been implanted in it. She also expressed her vast gratitude to Mrs. Foster, and her desire to be further acquainted with her; and the letter was terminated by a postscript, "that a letter had arrived from her father, announcing that she might expect him at home in two or three days."

The Earl of Bosworth and Bohun probably arrived in the great metropolis on the same day, but our business lies chiefly with the latter.

Mr. Hargrave was delighted with him, and actually pressed him to his bosom in the warmth of his affection.

Bohun dined tête-à-tête with him in Grosvenor Square, and much of the evening was passed in canvassing the results of his journey, both as related to Bohun's own concerns and the interesting Lady Susan, and to the view he had taken of commercial affairs on the Continent; after which they had some very serious conversation on the alarming position of things in England, and Mr. Hargrave complimented his young friend very sincerely on the just view he had taken a year ago of the consequences that must ensue from the rage of speculation which at that time pervaded the country. They also canvassed the effects and ramifications of this—and the great merchant had never been so candid and confidential with any one on business matters, and was so

much the more struck with the clear views, and powers of rapid calculation of his young friend.

The hurricane soon overspread the land, and down came joint-stock enterprises, bankers, merchants, traders and thousands of people who ought never to have had anything to do with speculation; but the commercial leviathan commanded and steered by Mr. Hargrave, and piloted by Bohun, rode majestically through the tempest, and rendered much assistance to others in cases where assistance could be of avail.

Lawyers, auctioneers, and house and estate agents, had their harvest.

Bohun's reputation caused him to have as much business as he was able to get through, and the money flowed into his bankers in a copious current; but he thought it of great importance to start in his matrimonial career in a respectable style, and also, by some further delay, to avoid all hazard of Lord Bosworth proceeding in the civil courts for a divorce, and therefore he resisted the temptation to anticipate the time originally proposed for his union with Lady Susan: the only thing to be regretted was, that the young lady had not like himself that constant occupation which withdrew his thoughts from this one most interesting subject; but still, the entire confidence Bohun had inspired her with prevented her yielding to anything like despondency during the delay.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## LORD BOSWORTH.

THE long hoped-for arrival of Lord Bosworth came at length, but was not attended with all the anticipated joy, for, alas! the hearty and tender embraces of his fair daughter were not so responded to as to satisfy her warm heart. He inquired what made her leave Ems before his arrival; and when she told the particulars of her adventure at Belle Vue, he seemed furiously angry against Lady Wolfe and at the same time astonished, and became, like his daughter, suspicious of Lady Seraphina, whom he then thought proper to stigmatize by two words which any woman of any rank would shudder to have applied to her. But Lady Susan could not avoid noticing that his indignation was more conspicuous than the interest he appeared to feel in her.

He coolly asked, "what became of the American; and how she got home?"

She told him, "that all she knew of the American was by his card, which was produced, and that she owed the means of reaching England to the kindness and generosity of Mr. Hoffmann, the banker at Coblenz, who not only employed a conducteur to escort her and her maid to Dover, but let her have a sum of money in hand to sup-

port her after landing in England, and she thought the total expense attending her journey, and also paying an arrear of expenditure at Ems, which the hotel keeper demanded before he would allow her maid to come away with her things, could not be less than a hundred pounds."

"Well," said his lordship, "I have always heard that this man was very rich, so that such a sum is a trifle to him; but I shall be going up the Rhine next year, and will stop at Coblenz and pay him, and also thank him."

This cool way of showing gratitude for the preservation of his only child was a great mortification to Lady Susan, who, owing to the tender assiduities of Bohun, and the long enduring fondness of her aunt, both previous and subsequent to her acquaintance with him, had anticipated an entirely different reception; and this conduct not only gave her extreme pain, but also led her to imagine that there was a want of that honourable principle which should induce a father to acquit himself as promptly as possible of such an important pecuniary obligation as had effected the preservation of his child. However, she remained quite quiet under this feeling, which the conduct of Bohun and Mr. Hargrave partly gave rise to, because it was highly desirable to conceal for the present the important share that they had in her restoration in safety to her home in England. Besides which, she considered herself bound to defer to the earnest injunction of Bohun, by abstaining from any allusion to him.



Alas! this was the commencement of another gloomy winter, but it was attended with the assured conviction that more than one dear and ready friend was at hand on whom she could now entirely rely, and to whose assistance she could resort in the worst emergency.

There was not much change in the character of the establishment at Bosworth House after the return of its lord. It was still cold, the manners of the few additional inmates were churlish and uncomplying, and it reached her ears, through Lucy, that her father, being now deprived of his official salary, was considered by them to be very poor; and they said, "that though he had large estates, he was obliged continually to raise money upon them," which news was by no means cheering to her, for the remarks she had formerly heard drop from her aunt were much to the same purport, and she had heard Lady Bewdley attribute her father's necessities to the "accursed vice of gambling."

One morning (they were very rarely together in the evening) Lord Bosworth said, "what was that story of the attempt to rob you, which was I think mentioned in one of your letters, and which has been alluded to by friends of mine once or twice since my return to England?"

"Oh, papa, at the time I said little about it; partly because I was frightened very much; but, chiefly, because Mr. Hallifax, the gentleman who attended my aunt, said 'that her nerves were so shaken that they

must never be excited by a mention of the adventure.' She was taken out of the carriage quite insensible, and her recovery was very slow; and, indeed, for some time small hopes could be entertained of it. The attempt was made in a night rendered quite dark by dense clouds which preceded a terrific thunder-storm, accompanied by heavy rain, which, I think, bewildered the senses of my poor aunt before the attack of the robbers."

"Well, tell me the particulars of the attack, if you are able."

"Yes, I can now; for, before I left Yorkshire, I rode over to Trapstone Hill with Mike, the coachman who was on the box when we were assaulted by three men, who evidently intended to back the carriage over the precipice, and he explained the battle to me."

She then told the story nearly in Mike's words to her father, who took considerable interest in it, and the idea of his daughter perishing in that frightful manner roused him for once to an emotion of tenderness, and the delight that afforded to his charming daughter brought tears to her eyes.

"And pray is Lady Bewdley entirely ignorant of this?"

"I believe she has no idea of it."

"Well, it's not worth while to rake it up now; but I must call upon Mr. Bohun, and thank him for his gallant behaviour. Do you know his address?"

"It's in the Temple, papa."

“Very well, I shall find him. I like his name too, it’s ancient and very rare now; the Smiths, and Tailors, and Coopers, have driven almost all the good old names out of the land. Do you know anything of his pedigree?”

“I only heard that his father was a colonel in the army, and killed in Spain.”

“I think I recollect it; he distinguished himself in the battle of Salamanca, and was killed in the moment of victory: a right sort of breed for a chivalrous encounter.”

“I don’t think there is much in that, papa; the Smiths and Tailors that you have alluded to behave with as much spirit and devotion as any others when they are called upon.”

“I don’t deny that; but still I think if a Tailor had stood on the top of the precipice, in view of the fight, he might perhaps have taken measure of the case more cautiously than this Bohun, and thought he was not exactly cut out to suit it. However, I’ll call this morning, and if I have an opportunity of serving him at any time I will, and I’ll let him know it.”

Lady Susan was stung by this idea of reimbursing the services of her lover by such means, but she did not dare to talk on the subject for fear of betraying emotions she had been so strongly enjoined to control, and his lordship went forth on his errand attended with the regret of Lady Susan that her father’s sentiment of what

was due to Bohun differed so widely from her own. But she persuaded herself, that if they anyhow came together, the very winning manners of her lover could not fail to propitiate him, and that in the result some opening might be made for a little occasional intercourse between them; but this did not fall out according to the sweet lady's wish, for the next time they met his lordship seemed anything but pleased with the result of his visit of duty.

"It seems, dear papa," said Lady Susan, when they met at dinner, "as if this interview with Mr. Bohun had not been quite so satisfactory as you anticipated."

"Why, no, he is a rude abrupt sort of a fellow; but you shall hear. In the first place, after finding my way to the murky hole where he lived, I had to go up two pair of stairs to his chambers, as they call these hutches in which they live, a dozen perhaps in a house, and when at last I got there and obtained admittance, the shabby clerk who had let me in (Lady Susan blushed in secret to hear her kind friend so described) asked me, while I was still out of breath, 'if I had any appointment?' To this I answered in the negative of course. 'Then, sir, you cannot see Mr. Bohun, he is pressingly engaged, and desired not to be interrupted on any business whatever.' 'I do not come on business,' I said, 'give Mr. Bohun this card;' upon which the fellow looked aghast, I dare say he had never seen a lord in those precincts before (I am sure he will never see me

there again), so, after asking me to sit down, he went in to get the authority for me to enter, and Mr. Bohun came to the door to receive me; such an object I never saw! neither shaved nor washed, and whether a comb or brush had ever been applied to his hair no one could have guessed; he was clad in a loose dirty morning gown, and apologized for his appearance, saying, 'he was not well, but obliged to work very hard, and, in fact, just now had not been in bed for two nights.' He was such a poor emaciated-looking wretch, that I thought there must be an error as to the identity, but he set that right in a moment by saying, 'that he hoped Lady Susan was in good health,' the purpose of my visit being thus initiated, I told him 'that I had arrived in town only a short time since, and made it my business to call and thank him for rescuing my daughter and my sister Lady Bewdley under very alarming circumstances, which brave and generous act I should never lose the remembrance of, and that if any interest I possessed could ever be rendered serviceable to him, I would take advantage of my influence with the utmost zeal if he made application to me.' In answer to this he merely said, 'that he was very happy to have accidentally assisted the ladies to whom I was related, and that, as to interest, he meant to rely entirely upon his own exertions and to be the architect of his own fortune,' and as he did not apparently wish to prolong our interview I rose to depart, and he followed me towards the door. Some-

how, the thing had not gone exactly to my liking, so I turned round and, offering my hand, said, ‘ Mr. Bohun, you are, I perceive, a very busy man, and I too am much engaged during the London season, but I have always understood that you gentlemen of the long robe have a vacation in the summer, and if you would come down and visit me at Conquest Hall, where I propose to be staying in August and September, it will give me and my daughter great pleasure.’ While I was saying this his features relaxed into a very expressive smile, and he shook my hand with perfect cordiality, and we parted very good friends ; but, I must say, it was a relief to me to find that we should not have him as a hanger-on throughout this season, and also to think that my visit was paid ; but I am surprised that such a poor emaciated creature should have had the dash in him necessary for venturing on a fight ad outrance on such a sudden call as this ; but, certainly, he has a grand eye, there is something Buonapartean about him ; judging from his eye only one would consider him a man of great force, but his lean emaciated body does not at all match it.

“ Possibly he may be ill, papa, and that would make his hard work tell very much upon him, poor creature.”

“ It’s well he does not hear you call him ‘ poor creature,’ I’ve a notion you would have a frown that would terrify you.”

“ I would not willingly offend him by any means.”

The conversation then terminated, but the sweet lady

often thought with pain of her father's report of Bohun's state of health ; and, as she occasionally had visits from Frank Forrester, when she saw him next she mentioned to him that her father had called on Bohun and reported that he was very ill.

" Yes," said Forrester, " he has had too much work to recover his strength yet, he's very much engaged—always in something or other—and I never pick up a guinea by any good luck ; but, I dare say, that when vacation comes he will run down to Bath or Hastings and take ten days' rest and change of air and come home a new man for the following Term."

Lady Susan added her wish to the same purport, but had now become too guarded to express the earnest anxiety she really felt ; and the young gentleman spoke, with great regret, of the distance of his paternal domain, which put it out of *his* power to enjoy a similar recreation.

Now, it may be remembered, that notice was given very early in this narrative of the deranged state of Lord Bosworth's affairs, and at this time his lordship's estate resembled a patient of whom the doctor had pronounced that all circulation had ceased, and that recovery was hopeless ; and, by way of confirmation that the end of all was at hand, Mr. Hutchinson, his land steward, arrived from the country to tell his lordship that the whole establishment in ——— shire must be forthwith broken up, and the servants discharged without their

wages, for that all the farm rents were now gathered in by the agents of various mortgagees, and he could obtain no money for any purpose whatever.

His lordship felt this to be a very embarrassing position, there was nothing to be done, at least his faculties could devise no means of extrication, except, peradventure, marching arm in arm with his steward to Messrs. Chevrón and Pale, the solicitors of his lordship, in whose ingenuity he trusted for devising a resource for "the preservation of his family," as the noble peer chose to phrase it to those gentlemen, who knew well how much of his time and pursuits had been devoted to the destruction of his family; and they frankly told him that till Lady Susan came of age no part of the property could be finally alienated; but that in the event of her marriage, previous to that time, some part of the settled property might perhaps, by accord of both parties, be given up to him in perpetuity; but that hope or prospect afforded nothing whatever to meet the present difficulty.

The solicitors reminded his lordship, "that they had warned him of the approach of it, and pointed out the advantage that might result from the employment of an able junior barrister, aided by an accountant or actuary, to investigate the situation of the estate, with the mortgages upon it and upon the various parts of it, the annual value, and the practicable improvements, whereby in the result a greater rent might possibly be obtainable, and his lordship's allowance in the mean time increased.



It was true, that at this time, the banks had not money on hand which they could put out on mortgage at a small per centage, but they might be able to take the whole on hand and perhaps give his lordship something more per annum."

They then reminded their noble client of this suggestion having been submitted to him long ago and neglected, and therefore *they* could not now be upbraided with the fatal consequences.

Nevertheless he finally persuaded those gentlemen to write to Lady Bewdley, submitting the great advantage it would be for the family to prepare for some display at the present time, in order that Lady Susan might be presented, and that there was little doubt of an alliance being formed for the young lady with the Marquess of Westcliff, or some other nobleman of high rank; because, independent of her birth, it was to be considered that on the decease of her father she would gain possession of a fine domain and landed property, which facts, considered in connection with her eminent attractions, would lead to her being considered the greatest match of the season.

As things stood at present the establishment in London was almost in a state of destitution, and his lordship's life interest in all the settled property being mortgaged, there was nothing to pay gardeners and others employed on the domain at Conquest Hall and in the mansion; and on further discussion with Mr. Hutchinson the attornies gave their opinion that nearly or quite two thou-

sand pounds would be needful in the whole to carry through next September, as with the most rigid economy fifty pounds per week would be essential for maintaining the town and country establishments, and Lady Susan's dresses would cost on the most moderate estimate three hundred pounds.

The noble peer finally authorized them to write to Lady Bewdley, "that if her ladyship could be prevailed on to render this timely and important relief, the whole amount of the country disbursements should be remitted to that very respectable person Mr. Hutchinson by instalments, and that the sum to be disbursed in London should, while Lady Susan was in town, be sent to them, and they would undertake to defray all necessary expenses and exhibit vouchers for the same;" and in a page of their letter, not communicated to Lord Bosworth, they advised "that none of the money should go into his lordship's hands, but they suggested that, in order to save their credit with him, this arrangement ought to appear to emanate entirely from Lady Bewdley, and they begged that she would have the kindness to consult her own very able adviser, Mr. Holroyd, and if she thought proper to accede to their request, that she would permit the instructions respecting the disbursement of the money to proceed from him direct to themselves."

Our old friend Lady Bewdley was at this time raked by a double fire—the noble peer, who never omitted an

opportunity of extracting what he could from the venerable lady, now urged this new and formidable demand ; while, at the same time, she was assailed by his lordship's brother, the Hon. and Rev. Canon Altham, of York, for funds to defend him against a formidable action of ejectment.

This good lady, whose income derived from land did not exceed two thousand two hundred pounds per annum, had for many years practised rigid economy, and had resisted to the utmost of her power the majority of family applications, though she was obliged to meet the formidable bills of Mrs. Lofty, amounting to nearly four hundred pounds per annum, but the gradual improvement of her lovely niece, her grace, her attainments, accomplishments, and beautiful development of form without any abatement of her natural winning modesty, so blended themselves with that outlay in the mind of the old lady that, without caring to abate for what was due to nature, she cheerfully paid the bills.

Notwithstanding all the various deductions, and the house expenditure, the old lady had gradually accumulated a fund of more than ten thousand pounds in the funds, and it gave her great pain to think that this nest egg must be cracked ; but the explicit, business-like, and straightforward letter of Messrs. Chevron and Pale made an impression on her, and she could not bear the idea that all her labour and expence should, at the moment of turning them to account, be defrauded as it were of

their natural fruits, therefore she had an interview with Mr. Holroyd, and gave him and her bankers orders to carry into effect what she was disposed to assent to, by selling stock to the amount of one thousand pounds, and she promised to make good the remainder in the spring following, either by a further sale of stock, or out of the rents then receivable by her.

Mr. Hutchinson caught at the suggestion of the lawyers to have a thorough over-hauling of the accounts and legal embarrassments of the estate, and asked, "whether Mr. Bohun, the gentleman who saved the lives of the ladies, would not like the job;" but they said, "he was too much engaged in the courts now to be able to spare time for this chamber business, and, besides, they thought an equity man rather fitter for it."

"But," said my lord, "who is to pay for this? For you see if Lady Bewdley agrees to the proposition of Messrs. Chevron and Pale I shall have little more than bread and cheese."

"I fear then we must wait a little longer," said Mr. Pale.

As the peer walked home with Mr. Hutchinson he told him, "that he did not like to employ Bohun on this job, for Westcliff and he were from some cause or other bitter enemies."

Mr. Hutchinson combatted this, and said, "there was no occasion for Lord Westcliff's knowing anything about it;" which important consideration had weight with the

lord, and he said, "well, do you go to my old friend Mr. Justice Lyttleton with this card, and ask if he will do me the favour to dine at Bosworth House to-morrow, and to fix his own time, and I will consult him about these matters, and you shall dine with us if he comes: and go and ask Frank Forrester also—he is a merry fellow, and we will get on as well as we can. Lyttleton and I were at college together, and both of us were at Westminster, and he is remarkably clever, and if he is always 'as grave as a judge' why he is very much altered."

This was a bold coup to invite three people to dine with him, without a sou in his pocket for supplying a dinner for five; but he went to his daughter, and got five pounds from her (part of her aunt's allowance), for which sum a tavern keeper undertook to supply the evening's entertainment.

The parties came, and his lordship introduced Mr. Hutchinson as a particular friend of his from the country, and at once, in the interval before dinner, began his enquiries about the character of Bohun.

"Oh!" said his lordship, "he is quite above such questions as that, he is one of our first and best."

"But," said Lord Bosworth, "Westcliff tells me he was once tried for his life for robbing his master."

"That is a matter that ought never to have been mentioned—the whole thing was a villanous conspiracy; and I, happening to be engaged for Bohun, blew the parties up in ten minutes, and Mr. Hargrave repented

bitterly that he had acted so precipitately and harshly against Bohun ; for those abilities which have raised my young friend to such a high position at the Bar would have been of incalculable advantage to Mr. Hargrave in the management of his business, and I know that he feels immense regret at having diverted them into another channel."

"Then you think," said his lordship, "that Bohun will rise to the highest honours of the Bar?"

"Not to the highest, for he has a drawback ; when his case is a bad one, he is not animated with the same zeal, and does not advocate his client's cause with the same earnestness which he always shows when he feels that his client is in the right. I don't think that he omits any argument, or fails to apply the law so far as it can be shown to be in the client's favour ; but in a bad cause the energy and warmth are not quite the same as in a good one. Now the highest grades in our profession are attained by partizanship in the House of Commons, and I think he would not undertake to support a political party through right and wrong, and must, therefore, be content with some years of lucrative practice, and finally a seat on the Bench like my own."

"Is your young friend rich then?" said Lord Bosworth.

"Your question rather puzzles me ; he lives in a very retired, and, as I am told, parsimonious manner : but I have heard of his doing generous things."

“I went up the Rhine with him in September last,” said Forrester, “and he would not let me pay any thing; but the other morning he asked me to breakfast at his chambers, and though there was plenty to eat, his display was in other respects very moderate, for instance, there was only one tea-spoon, so he gave that to me and stirred his own tea with his fork without seeming to regard it in the least. He could only give half an hour, but the greater part of that time he talked for my benefit.”

His lordship's party was then summoned to dinner; and the fish was good, the saddle of mutton excellent, and the five bottles of wine (which were consumed) were of very passable quality.

After dinner, the judge complimented Forrester on having made a very good exhibition in court the other day; and told him that if he would devote himself to work, it was evident that nature had given him sufficient talents to command success, and there was still a chance for him, though not to rival Bohun.

The lady retired early, and a short time afterwards, his lordship turning the conversation to his own affairs, Forrester availed himself of the opportunity to join Lady Susan, whom he had not seen for some time.

When he arrived the lady said, “I was highly pleased to hear that you had devoted yourself to your profession, and made such an admirable début. I trust it will encourage you to persevere.”

“ Ah ! Lady Susan,” he said, “ I was ashamed of those praises ; Bohun dragged me into court as his second in a trifling cause, and taught me everything about the case, and put the words into my mouth, and gave me a list of legal decisions in point, and after having made *his* opening speech left me alone to conduct the case, so I did my best ; the judge took care I should have fair play, and my side happened to win ; but, you know, I cannot have that aid again.

Tea was brought, and a piano having been hired for the young lady, she sat down to the instrument and sang an Italian air.

There was a silence when it was over, and the lady said, “ I ought to apologize, I fancy, for singing that badly.”

“ Upon my word,” said Forrester, “ I had something else in my mind and did not notice how you sang it.”

“ Well, Mr. Frank, I should be glad to hear how you will turn that into a compliment.”

“ I must not try, it would be insincere ; the fact is, a sudden thought crossed my mind that I had assisted in giving an unfavourable impression of Bohun, to whom I owe so much ; I must try to correct it. At all events, *you* will believe me when I say that he is a noble, generous fellow ; and I will try to convince the others.”

“ Well, I am very glad of your repentance, and have no doubt of your candour ; and now, if you like, I will try the song again ; or, do you prefer any other ?”



“ No ; please to restore to me that which I have lost.”

In repeating it she sang with more pleasure than before, and with enchanting effect ; and the gentleman then gave full scope to his raptures, when about this time the wine and the conversation of the dinner table came to an end, and the other members of the party joined them.

In the course of the tea ceremony Mr. Hutchinson, who had taken some liking to Forrester, and from the praises of Justice Lyttleton had formed a favourable opinion of his legal qualifications, went up to Frank and asked if he was well skilled in arithmetic, but the answer was a dead blank, so that the little ærial edifice which honest Hutchinson had founded, and his momentary fancy of having found the right man for the right place, crumbled into dust ; and great was his lamentation that Bohun, the learned, the industrious, the accomplished in business, could not be called to the rescue of his patron ; and he only waited in London to hear the answer from Lady Bewdley, by the effect of which Messrs. Chevron and Pale were enabled to ensure him a weekly remittance of twenty-five pounds for the needful disbursements at Conquest Hall ; this revived the spirits of the good man, and he set off hoping to carry into effect the commands of his patron to get the grounds into perfect trim and the hall into as good order as possible by the latter end of August.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

## PIERREPOINT'S NARRATIVE.

ONE morning, some weeks subsequent to this, Lord Bosworth informed his daughter that he had met yesterday a young man, Mr. Pierrepoint, who was a short time a sub of his own, and had been since a secretary of embassy at Vienna, and he must have a small dinner party, for he had asked him to dinner that day, and it being necessary for Lady Susan to appear, he had asked Lady Seraphina Wolfe also, because the table would not be complete without another lady; and observed, that as it was not the fashion to sit long now, she would not have to pass any time with Lady Seraphina by herself.

The lady expressed great reluctance, but it was in vain, her father was absolute, and the two parties were engaged.

There was some difficulty about the dinner and wine, that is to say, in finding money to pay for them, but at last this was accomplished by his making his daughter give up the five pounds which her aunt had remitted to her for pocket money, and the party assembled.

Mr. Pierrepoint was a clever well-informed man, and

perfectly aware of what was passing in the world, and he knew the circumstances and characters of his lordship and that of his lady guest much more perfectly than they imagined. At the dinner table Mr. Pierrepoint showed himself the accomplished man of the world, and was very agreeable and quite at his ease, and if there was a difficulty of any sort it was perfectly unobserved, that is to say, apparently so.

When the cloth and servants were gone, his lordship apologized for his hock; this, however, Mr. Pierrepoint would not admit, "the wine was excellent;" "he was sure it was Marcobrunner"—"a wine not so much appreciated as it deserved, and, therefore, not adulterated." Lady Seraphina knew that the wine was poor stuff, and, therefore, perfectly understood all this. The younger lady was much happier in her ignorance.

In the course of conversation Lord Bosworth asked, if he had seen all his old English friends.

"Upon my word," said Mr. Pierrepoint, "I am perfectly amazed at the numerous gaps that I find amongst them; there are sad vacancies by death, which I could not have expected; others are away in the naval and military service; many are in posts in distant parts of the country or abroad, so that, my own family being in Somersetshire, I feel myself much more a stranger in London than in Vienna; but there is one man I have not yet looked up, and I am going after him to-morrow."

"Who is that?" said his lordship.

"His name is Alfred Bohun, and he has chambers in the Temple."

"Were you much acquainted with that person at Vienna?"

"Yes, I knew a great deal about him, and we parted sworn friends: at first I thought him rather a squire of dames, for he danced and sang, and I supposed he was as vain and silly as persons of that sort usually are, but I found out by degrees that he was a very clever man of business, profoundly learned in civil law, and of very shrewd judgment."

"Did he not run away from Vienna to escape fighting a duel?" said Lady Seraphina.

"Upon my word," said Pierrepont, laughing, "you might as well inquire about my horse running away from a feed of corn."

"But, indeed," said the lady, "I was informed so, and by no less a person than Prince Kremnitz."

"Very likely, my lady," said Pierrepont, "but we diplomatists do not regard that source of information as perfectly reliable; on the contrary, I generally considered a communication from that noble person in the light of a finger post pointed the opposite way to the right."

"But did not your friend Bohun seduce the Countess Zinzendorf, and then refuse to fight her husband?"

"Excuse me, my dear madam, but if my fascinating friend has been on his knees to you, you need not

frown upon him on account of what passed at Vienna four or five years ago."

"On his knees to me, sir! how prompt you are to attribute wrong motives, Mr. Bohun never approached me with any rudeness, nor did he ever volunteer any particular civility."

"That being so," said Pierrepont, "I beg your pardon, he has become older than when we met at Vienna, and experience has made him cautious."

"Very likely; but I am rather angry with him for cheating me into the belief of his being a German."

"He is a perfect German," said Pierrepont, "when he likes, and without any appearance of disguise."

"And, when he was at Vienna, was he not very particularly intimate with an old baroness, Coire?"

"He was."

"Well now, considering that all this happened five years ago, why should you not tell us about his adventures at Vienna? You see he was represented to Lady Susan and me as a very bad person, and you would be doing your friend a service both in our estimation and that of Lord Bosworth."

"Really, my lady," said his lordship, interrupting her, "I care very little about the matter, I never saw this Bohun but once, and he treated me very cavalierly; but he was such a dismal haggard looking wretch that I should not give him credit for any success with the ladies."

“ He dismal and haggard !” said Lady Seraphina, “ I call him a very handsome man : would not you say the same, Mr. Pierrepont ?”

“ Certainly, my lady, that was his reputation at Vienna ; but it very nearly led to a fatal result.”

“ Well, Pierrepont, the curiosity of Lady Seraphina must be satisfied,” said Lord Bosworth.

“ But it will be a long and tangled yarn, my lord.”

“ Then I can take a nap, and if my sleep is not over at the end of your tale, give me a jog.”

“ Well, ladies, then I will rake up what I recollect about my friend ; but mind, if you see him, don’t betray my revelations. A very curious circumstance brought him to Vienna : there was a serious and important conspiracy set on foot for defrauding the banks on the Continent ; a number of fellows, more clever than honest, having obtained fac-similes of the signatures of a great many bankers, exchange brokers and principal merchants in various parts of the Continent and London also, put forged bills into circulation and contrived to get money for them, and a great many people were defrauded, and, naturally, there was a great desire to put a stop to this, and the police of different countries were called upon ; but for a considerable time they had no success, and it was suggested that they wanted a superior head, a man well acquainted with German, French and Italian, and able to speak those languages fluently, and he was to be competent on the score of courage, address, and capacity

for assuming various characters and disguises. Mr. Hargrave, a great London merchant, selected Bohun ; and he was induced to undertake this difficult task for a sum of money sufficient to set him free from debt. Bohun told me, that he could not get through college, and obtain his legal education preparatory to the bar, without incurring debt, and that the sense of it weighed him down ; and Mr. Hargrave tempted him to undertake this dangerous enterprize on the condition of being entirely freed of all debt if his exertions were successful. This prospect induced him to embark on this neck or nothing scheme. I cannot narrate his proceedings, or his hair breadth escapes from murder ; but he was successful at last in tracing all the parties, and as he went on he placed one after another under the surveillance of the police of different countries, and by means of the correspondence, through the police office at Vienna, he gradually drove all his birds into the net at that city.

“He was first introduced into Vienna by the private influence of the bankers, and he spent several days partly in good society, and partly in gambling houses and billiard rooms, before his spells were ripe for the grand coup. During this time he was seen in the best salons, well dressed, pleasing in his manners, graceful in the waltz, money in his pocket, and capable of losing a little of it with very good grace ; and one of the earliest friends he made was the old baroness, who was rejoiced to find somebody who would lose to her, for she

had skill enough to win his money—or, perhaps, he submitted to that mode of acquiring her patronage—and she made herself as agreeable as possible to induce him to sit down with her. She was a cunning old gossip, and picked up a great deal of information, which was imparted to Bohun in exchange for his florins. One evening that they were employed in this way, while dancing was going on, the lovely Countess Zinzendorf stopped near the couple, and asked ‘if he did not waltz?’ ‘Certainly,’ he said, ‘when I can get a partner.’ ‘Then finish your game, and I will shortly give you an opportunity.’ The waltz came off very soon after, and I believe both parties enjoyed it as much as possible. Bohun asked his old piquet partner about this lady of course, and was informed ‘that her husband was Count Zinzendorf—a most absurd and contemptible being; but that Prince Kremnitz was reputed to possess a superior interest in the lady, who, in consequence, had more influence than any woman in Vienna, and that Bohun must conduct himself with great prudence, for the arbitrary tyrant would find means to destroy him if he became her accepted friend.’

“They danced together for three nights after this, and the day following that was the climax of all Bohun’s arrangements; but he was still to be about in his usual indifferent style, and accordingly, went to the billiard table, where he purposely lost two or three games, in order that there might be no claim on him to continue



playing. He then went to a music shop, with the proprietor of which he had become intimate, in consequence of Bohun employing the old gentleman to collect chaunts and other old music for him, for he was particularly devoted to the search after ancient compositions preceding the æra of the great masters of the last century. While he was talking with the music-seller on these subjects, the latter told him 'that he had a very fine pianoforte just finished, and which he would be obliged to Bohun to make trial of.' Accordingly he sat down, and was singing various portions of chaunts to try the different parts of the instrument; when, in the midst of this, a carriage stopped at the door, and the Countess Zinzendorf descended to enquire about this instrument which had been constructed expressly for her. As she entered, the good man of the shop walked forward to meet her, and, in reply to her enquiry, pointed to the instrument and said 'that he had got a gentleman who was a great connoisseur in music to make trial of it, which was then going on, and her ladyship might hear his report.' The lady listened some time without showing herself, being delighted both with the melody of the voice, and the true harmony throughout the instrument. At length the performer rose, and was going to comment on the good qualities of the instrument, when he found himself unexpectedly vis-à-vis with the Countess Zinzendorf. The lady looked highly pleased, and held out her hand, which, of course, he did not refuse; and

she praised his singing, and asked his opinion of the instrument. 'Upon my word,' he said, 'I think if your ladyship gets this safe home, you will be possessed of one of the very finest pianos I have met with.' The lady then asked the maker of the instrument 'how soon it could be delivered?' and being assured 'that it should be at the Zinzendorf Palace in an hour and a half,' she said 'she would take Mr. Bohun with her, so that he might try it when there, and see whether it was in any way disturbed during the conveyance.' Bohun did not much like this, for he had an assignation with the police officer to meet him at that place; however, he thought it would be equally well if he gave directions to the people of the shop for the police officer to follow him; the consequence of which was, that before the arrival of the piano, the man came to claim Bohun, and the latter declared his readiness to go, but the lady insisted on detaining him, and when, in the course of explanation, she learned that some culprits would be assembled at a certain haunt that night, and that the attendance of this gentleman was necessary to point out the offenders, the lady took the alarm, and said, 'will not that be attended with danger?' The officer admitted that it would; and that decided the matter, for the lady said at once, with a most determined air, 'then Mr. Bohun shall not go.' The policeman said, 'one of my followers knows these fellows, and I think he can point them out, and if Mr. Bohun will let me have his clothes I will cause this

man to impersonate him.' 'But,' said my friend, 'that is a cowardly contrivance, which I cannot be party to.' 'Now,' said the lady, 'if I apprehend this thing rightly, a few are to be selected out of a greater number, why not increase your force and take the whole?' 'That will do very well, my lady,' said the officer, 'but I must have the effigy of Mr. Bohun; nevertheless the young man who impersonates him shall be exposed to no danger.' The lady ordered some old things of her husband's to be placed in a certain room upstairs, for which those of my friend were delivered up, and Bohun was detained in the palace. That is all that I can say about the commencement of the acquaintance. That same night the lady made her appearance at a *soirée*: so did her lord; but the amiable old lady that played piquet with Bohun was disappointed of her recreation and her *douceur*, and she went home very cross.

"Bohun was at the Hall of Justice very soon after the court opened, and was happy to find all his prisoners there, and he detailed to the court the particulars of their frauds, and also who had been robbed by these men, and these parties were summoned to attend at Vienna and give evidence as to the identity of the prisoners, and to bring such clerks and documents as were needful for proving their guilt. The slowness of the proceedings detained Bohun some time at Vienna, and he did his best to expedite them, and displayed a knowledge of civil law which spurred up the old Wigsbys

there. However, he got through his own evidence first, and very clearly and minutely pointed out the instances of fraud which he had from time to time detected, and which had led to the identification of the prisoners; and it happened very strangely that the man whom he first discovered was an Englishman, who had laid a plot for the destruction of Bohun five or six years before in England, and fled in consequence of the conspiracy exploding.

“Though Bohun had to work hard during this time it did not wholly suspend the intimacy with the countess, he taught her to sing some very pretty English and Scotch airs, and he took pains to make her sing them with very exquisite effect, and as the lady had a great love of the art and a great degree of natural taste and feeling, she was a very apt scholar, and the applause that her performances elicited was very flattering to her; nor was this applause in any degree insincere, for the airs as she sung them were beautiful in themselves and entirely novel to the audience, and had a peculiar though simple character which constituted a great charm. The people of rank in Vienna are by no means a busy class, and seldom assemble there in such numbers as fashionable people in London, so that anything out of the common way is soon talked of among the superior society of the capital, and of course it became quite the rage to hear Lady Zinzendorf sing. The lovely lady could accompany herself, but she was always desirous of the assistance of

Bohun, which somehow or other enhanced the power and effect; but I must do my friend the justice to say that no man could have behaved with more retiring modesty than he did, and when the potent Kremnitz was of the party he generally had some particular business elsewhere. However, my young friend enjoyed a very pleasant time of it, but it frequently happens that when fortune has been peculiarly kind and gracious for a time, the capricious goddess suddenly takes an opposite turn in order to make every one sensible of her power, and in this instance the belle of Vienna herself, kind and affectionate as she was, was appointed to lay the foundation of his reverse. She took it into her head that her musical reign would become ennuyant without greater variety, and she insisted upon Bohun getting up some duets, and, though he remonstrated and pointed out the danger, the wilful lady persisted, and according to her wish and expectation the duets were more applauded than the airs; and, speaking for myself, I must confess that I never was so charmed with music as I was with those airs and duets, because they were melodies of which I had remote remembrance, which made them come upon my mind and feelings with enhanced gratification.

“But the sequel of all this delight was at hand. I have mentioned how these performances were the talk and fashion of the day, and the consequence was that the Empress heard descriptions of them which excited

her curiosity, and she signified her pleasure that the lady and the English minstrel should appear at court. The performances were highly approved, and after some songs from the countess and one or two duets, her Majesty expressed an urgent desire to hear a solo by the gentleman. Bohun had hoped to escape this, but he had also prepared himself in case the event should occur, and, striking a few chords of the instrument to lead him into the right key, he got up and sang Haydn's Hymn in the manner of a bard, and he astonished all the party by the power and sweetness of his voice, and the grand and eloquent effect which he gave to an anthem so peculiarly fitted to the audience and the occasion.

“Prince Kremnitz was one of the party in this entertainment, and he quickly penetrated the state of the countess's feelings, and the old fool her husband being present also, he rated him furiously for permitting his lady, a person of exalted rank, to be acquainted with this adventurer. The unfortunate husband, who had felt up to that moment that he was at the summit of grandeur, was appalled by the fierce remark of the arbitrary tyrant, and so utterly confounded that he knew not what to say or do.

“As this was the concluding scene of Bohun's intercourse with the countess, let me beg you to listen to a few words of apology for him. In the first place, he was then only twenty-four years old; secondly, he was at the time much elated by his success in a very arduous

struggle, and his spirits excited by the ease, luxury and commendation he enjoyed, in delightful contrast with the hardship, anxiety and danger which had been his lot for several previous months; and, lastly, he assured me, on his honour, that he had never made the slightest effort to win the lady, nor had he at any time made a promise to her, and when I upbraided him with wanting the sense of duty which animated Æneas to tear himself from the arms of his Dido, he declared that his passports had been refused, and he attributed their being withheld chiefly to the interference of the countess."

"All the guilt lies with the poor woman, of course," said Lady Seraphina.

"It is very kind and liberal of your ladyship to remind me of my duty towards her, but I assure you that her cause shall not want an advocate in due season: but to go on with my story, the Empress sent for Bohun and took a diamond ring off her own finger and presented it to him; he received it kneeling, and pressed it to his lips before he rose, and placed it on his finger. Of course the poor terrified count knew not how to proceed, but Kremnitz turned away with contempt, and determined to take the dénouement of the affair into his own hands, for he feared Bohun becoming a favourite, and perhaps a rival at court, more than anything else, and having signified to two of his adepts that he wished this impertinent sing-song coxcomb out of the way, they were ready enough to be the instruments.

“I was at court that night, and had noticed this bit of bye-play, and went early next day to the billiard room which Bohun frequented to give him an urgent caution to be off, when I found him already in the toils, for one of these fellows, a sturdy Croat, who thought himself a match for any swordsman, had just engaged him in play; the other, who was a dead shot with the pistol, was from the north of Italy; and I took my station near the table, so as to be some check upon the proceedings of these fellows, and had an opportunity of saying to Bohun, unobserved, in English, ‘take care of these men;’ but, though his caution made it difficult to raise a quarrel, the ruffian Croat broke through all restraint and struck Bohun, the latter was on his guard, and avoided the attempt so as to receive only a slight touch, but he returned the compliment with such a blow on the right eye as I had no conception of, and the burly champion, happening to stand near an open window, toppled over it, and pitching on his right shoulder bruised it so much, that when, after a considerable time, he recovered his senses, he was unable to lift his hand to his head. After a few moments the Italian said, ‘ah! he is no gentleman.’ Upon this Bohun said, ‘according to the manners and the law of my country, a man who is struck may retort instantly in the way I have done, and punish his adversary on the spot if he is able.’ ‘Then,’ said the other, ‘you are a set of uncivilized barbarians.’ ‘Which means,



said Bohun, 'that you want to blow my brains out.' The other assented, saying, he only acted for the preservation of good manners, and Bohun immediately asked me to be his second. I told him of the strictness of our diplomatic system, but, finally, in consideration of his being an Englishman wrongfully assaulted, and the obligation I felt to save a fellow-countryman from being murdered if I could, I agreed to go out with him. Neither party wished for delay, and the appointment was made to meet at four o'clock, at a place agreed upon, about five miles from the city, and I carried my own pistols loaded in case of any unfair play, and I engaged a surgeon to follow us.

"On our way out he gave me a letter to his mother, to be sent in case of his death. He then remarked, that he thought these two men had been set on to do this, and I assured him that his conjecture was right, and that his adversary was a dangerous fellow, for he was an adept in the use of the pistol. 'I am very glad of your caution,' said Bohun, 'I now understand that I must fight for my life.' After that he seemed more at his ease, much more, in fact, than I was, for I expected no other result than to see my poor young friend prostrate on the ground after the first shot, and pouring out his life-blood on the sod.

"Both parties arrived nearly at the same time, and I must say that the eagle eye and firm deportment of Bohun rather seemed to give the adversary an idea that

his undertaking was not wholly free from danger. I secured that the distance should be twelve paces, and the pistols being loaded they took their position, and it fell to my lot to pronounce the words 'present,' 'fire,' but at the end of one agonizing instant after the last word had passed my lips, the challenger spun round and fell, his pistol being discharged as well as Bohun's. We walked up immediately, and Bohun put his handkerchief to the man's face and looked at the direction the ball had taken, and said, 'it is not mortal.' The surgeon confirmed this, and I left him and the second to take care of the wounded man, being very anxious for expediting our return.

"We got off to Vienna with all possible speed, for I feared there might be some ambuscade, and I told Bohun 'he must be off immediately or he would inevitably be thrown into some dungeon in the Tyrol, and probably starved to death.' 'But,' he said, 'I cannot get a passport.' We now drew near to Vienna, and I told him 'to put his bloody handkerchief to his head, and in all respects assume the semblance of being badly wounded, and that I would let him know my scheme presently.' The police were on the watch for us, and seeing the blood and the appearance of great suffering, accompanied by a faint groan, they were induced to think he was desperately wounded, and to confirm their opinion I feigned great agitation; by this we eluded further examination and I got him into my quarters in

the Embassy. I then got some money for the expenses of his journey home, and went to his lodgings, and after paying all expenses, and a *douceur* into the bargain, I got his portmanteau and music, and in exchange for my advances of money I got an order of his on a banker, which, of course, I did not present for a week. I then told him, 'that he must go in three hours, and on the journey impersonate a courier who was just being sent off with dispatches,' and I sealed up his portmanteau and other things as part of the dispatches; and next day I sent the right government messenger off after him, to follow with all possible speed, with orders to take the dispatches on from Frankfort. The messenger was a man I could entirely trust and all came perfectly right at last, but you would have laughed to see the grotesque figure of our friend when dressed up as a courier with false beard and moustaches, and wrapped in a large old great coat.

"But he prevailed upon me to perform a sad duty after his departure, namely, to explain matters to the unfortunate countess; and I called upon her next day, and forced my way almost to an audience, just when she had heard of the duel and that Bohun was shot, and she was in such an agony of distress and agitation that I was afraid of an entire collapse, so that the first words I uttered were, 'Bohun is not dead!' She started at that sound and said at once, 'Who are you?' I replied, 'that I was his second in the duel.' She clapped her

hands in ecstasy and said, 'Take me to him.' 'No, lady, you must see your physician immediately, and I will do nothing more except with his sanction;' and then I took my leave and caught the physician on his way before he saw the countess, and we laid a little plot together, which had a good result, and the lady lived, though I frustrated her intention of running after Bohun by telling her, when I made his departure known, that he was gone full speed to the great fortress of Gibraltar, where none but English were ever admitted."

"But," said Lady Seraphina, "was she so ignorant as to be imposed upon by such a monstrous fiction as that?"

"Yes, indeed, my lady; she had been some years in a convent before she was married, and had thought instruction useless, and the Lady Superior cared for nothing but her reading the Lives of the Saints, which are as full of wonder as fairy tales; and the poor thing had no chance of escaping from durance, but by marrying the worthy person who has been one of the heroes of my tale. And so, to conclude, the countess was ordered to the baths, and the good count was easily made to see things in a proper light, and submit to what was recommended for the good of his lady."

Lady Susan could not help saying, with a sigh, "Poor thing!"

"Well," said Lady Seraphina, "your poor thing has two husbands left."

"Pooh, pooh!" said Lord Bosworth, "a couple of

snuffy old smoke-dried Germans. Then your tragedy does not end with a catastrophe of shooting or drowning, Pierrepont."

"No, my lord, in Vienna they are not prone to these shocking results; on the contrary, the *dénouement* was that of a pleasant melodrame. The count has got an heir to his rank, and territory, and wealth, which makes him the happiest man in Vienna. The lady has got a creature to love, and the object of her doating affection is a boy, more beautiful than Raphael or Murillo ever painted an angel. All connexion was broken off with the prince, and his fury had no object to vent itself upon before I left Vienna."

"Certainly," said Lady Seraphina, "what you tell me does account for the violent accusations of Prince Kremnitz, and also for Bohun being so intimate with Baroness Coire, and the old woman must have missed him in the interval."

"She did, and contrived to get acquainted with the Countess Zinzendorf, on purpose that, like her, she might assist in spoiling this pet boy, in whom she takes marvellous delight; but though the boy is christened 'Maximilian Augustus Conrad Alexander Zinzendorf,' the malicious old woman always will call him 'Alfred.'"

Lady Seraphina and his lordship laughed.

"Upon my word," said Pierrepont, "this is not a thing to laugh at, for the old woman has no relations

that I ever heard of, and it would not surprise me if she made this lucky young dog her heir.

“The unlucky duellist was a great sufferer, in fact severely punished, as he deserved. Bohun aimed at the hand in which he held the pistol, which he struck, and the ball glanced off and went through his cheek, and at the time we apprehended danger only from the wound in the head, but it turned out that the thumb and hand were so severely injured that amputation was necessary: however the prince made him seneschal of his castle on the Rhine; I forget the name.”

“Was it Belle Vue?” said Lady Wolfe.

“That was not the original name of the château, my lady; but he built a pavilion there, which, I believe, now gives that name to it.”

“That is the man that we saw then, Lady Susan,” said the elder lady.

“Perhaps so,” said Lady Susan; “and I hope I shall never see the wretch again.”

They parted soon after, but not without an earnest injunction on Mr. Pierrepont by Lady Seraphina, to report to Lord Bosworth the actual state of Bohun’s form and figure, so as to extinguish the prejudice that he seemed to have imbibed against him.

Poor Lady Susan felt a good deal distressed during these disclosures, but when she thought over the matter

calmly on her pillow, reflecting on the lapse of time, and giving the fullest weight to every extenuating circumstance, and casting aside everything that might have been put into the opposite scale, she determined upon an exculpatory verdict for her lover, and afterwards slept in peace.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE LAST INSTALMENT.

THE winter seclusion of Lady Susan was almost as complete as if she had been shut up in a convent. Her father was generally out ; and, when at home, she had little of his society, because his feelings and pursuits and tastes differed widely from her own ; and he was not pleased with her for the determination with which she resisted an alliance with Lord Westcliff, whenever he touched upon the topic of her marriage. The poor lady suffered from the unpopularity of her father, and when the people of rank and fashion arrived in London, which at that date was earlier than it is at present, she perceived, though without regret, that none of the numerous equipages which were in motion by night and day in their immediate neighbourhood ever thought of stopping at Bosworth House. She recalled now all the accusations of her aunt, and felt that her position was the natural result of her father being an impoverished gambler ; and, being poor herself, she began to think herself an intruder in the realms of wealth, fashion and splendour.



Mrs. Foster was kind enough to give her an airing once a week by a walk in the Green Park, or Grosvenor or Berkeley Square, attended always by little Alfred, who became quite as fond of his new acquaintance as of his mama ; but their walks being early, the lady was not much seen, and, but for an occasional call of Frank Forrester, she might be said to remain incog.

It was not far from the equinox, that Mr. Forrester one day sent up his card, and he was received with great civility and kindness by the lady of the house ; but, it must be acknowledged that it was in part attributable to the hope of hearing something of Bohun.

The greeting of Mr. Frank was as cheerful as usual, and they had some talk about family matters and friends in the country, and she let him understand that, independent of a few books which were left in the house, her chief amusement consisted in writing to those friends and hearing news in reply.

“ A dreadfully dull life for so young a lady,” he said.

“ It may seem so to you men,” said the lady, “ who live always in bustle, or in dissipation.”

“ Not much dissipation for me,” said he, “ I am studying hard.”

The lady smiled, “ I hope the fit will last.”

“ Oh ! no doubt, with the relief of an occasional frolic, such as we had last night at Fosters’.”

“ At Fosters’?”

“ Yes ; but Bohun provided the elements of the entertainment.”

“ Surely,” said the lady, “ that was rather at variance with his usual habits.”

“ Entirely so ; but so it was, and you shall hear the occasion by-and-by. When he asked me, he mentioned his having a few friends to sup with him, as an exceptional case, and said that his sister, Mrs. Foster, that angel of a woman that I saw at Dover, had undertaken the trouble of it ; I was delighted at the idea of seeing her again, and he at once wrote me her address—a hole of a place in one of the wards of the City ; but trust me for finding my way to any place for the sake of seeing her, and especially in a merry party. Bohun went early for the purpose of helping to arrange everything, and when I arrived I found most of the party assembled. One was a musician, Signor Pulciano, a great master, as you may have heard, of the violoncello and preceptor of Bohun, in whom he seems to take great delight ; and there was a chorister or vicar choral from St. Paul's Cathedral ; these musical folks may be called birds of a feather. I had just been introduced to Mr. Foster, who is a pleasant gentleman-like man and has a very fine voice, and also to those I have mentioned, when there came a thundering rap at the door, and in walked the magnifico whom I had dined with in Grosvenor Square after my return from Dover. I was very civil to him, though he has never asked me since ;

and soon after his arrival the singing began, and these people, who were all adepts, made such delicious harmony that I never enjoyed any music so much, there was no squalling or effort, but all flowing, sweet, full and harmonious. The lady was in some instances a performer, vocally as well as on the pianoforte, and Signor Pulciano sustained the whole by notes of rich melody from his powerful instrument. I was glad to see the old merchant so very much delighted. Bohun shyed off from the singing; and, indeed, he did not seem in good spirits, but rather strange in his manner; however, supper was announced, and all at once the musical enthusiasm subsided, and we withdrew to partake of it; and, really, I don't think there was ever anything nicer than our spread, in the *petits soupés* of Versailles in the olden time.

“I had very little notion about eating while I was listening to the music, but when I took my place at the table my dormant appetite instantly woke up, and I played my part as if it had been the first serious meal of the day; and that was quite the humour of the hour, for all the good things were gradually absorbed, and I made them all laugh about the squeamishness which had put an end to this excellent old fashion of supping together; but, dear me, how easily people laugh after a good meal, when they have met together for the sole purpose of enjoying themselves.”

“Upon my word,” said Lady Susan, “I should have liked vastly to be there.”

“ Oh ! my lady, you would have spoiled the party.”

“ You rude fellow !”

“ I beg your pardon, only meaning, that if a countess had dropped in among us, nobody would have known how to behave, it would have been all deference and ceremony ; but I forgot to mention about the wines, the great merchant sent a basket of the elect of his own cellar, and I hope the *empty bottles* and the basket got safe back, but the wine fell into good hands, and gave peculiar zest to the holiday enjoyment of us poor folks, and the old gentleman looked on the scene with a sort of grave merriment.

“ I could not help laughing, afterwards, to think of the difference in condition between our majority of joy and gaiety and his calm rich satisfaction. I believe Foster scrapes together an income of between three and four hundred a-year—the vicar-choral, I suppose, approaches that sum—the musician, who is a delightful old gentleman, attains not much beyond the half—Bohun was just cleaned out, as he explained to me in our walk home,—and, as for myself, to tell the truth, my banker is always complaining that my balance, as he calls it, has an unfortunate preponderancy to the wrong side of the book ; but the balance of enjoyment that night was wonderfully in favour of us *poor* fellows.

“ We kept it up pretty late, even so as to make the rich horses of the millionaire wait a good while ; but, when we broke up, Bohun prevailed on the grandee to

take the good old musician and his fiddle safe home; and, finally, we two walked off to the most airy part of the Temple, and took several turns and had a gossip. I then rallied him about his odd behaviour in his own party: he would not sing, he could not play, was sometimes amazingly exalted, at other times meditative, he seemed to drift hither and thither like the May fly on the water. Well, finally, I got out ‘that he had that day paid off the last instalment of a large debt;’ that is to say, it was originally four thousand pounds, and, of course, he had interest to pay on this, and the premium of a five thousand pound policy on his life, taken out for the guarantee of the lender; and he said, ‘he would now not only keep the policy up for the benefit of his own successors, but had that day laid out what money he had left in opening another policy of the same amount;’ and he is well able to keep them up, for he has a handsome income at the bar, while I, alas! earn nothing. I told him ‘that all this carefulness convinced me he was preparing for matrimony;’ on which he immediately cut loose, saying, ‘that he had told me more of his family affairs than he intended, and he had work to do for next day which must be got through that night or early in the morning.’ ”

The early part of this narrative rather amused than interested Lady Susan, but towards the close she became more earnestly attentive, and if Forrester had been aware of her regard for Bohun, he might easily have

noticed her deep interest and excitement, and even the beating of her heart caused by the struggle to conceal her emotions, but just as he finished he was surprised by her yielding to a sense of faintness, and desiring him to open the window, and while he was employed upon the window bolt and raising the sash, she sank with her head on the table, and had nearly slid down on to the floor, but he instantly perceived the change, and lifted her in his arms, and seated her in the arm chair which he had before occupied.

Now it happened that, about the close of Forrester's story, Lord Westcliff had driven up to the house, and that the servant was holding the door open, and his lordship inquiring for Lady Susan, was at once shown into the drawing room, and the folding doors between front and back room being open, he came upon this scene unperceived, till, by accident, Forrester turning his head towards the bell, saw a stranger, and without knowing who he was, desired him "to ring the bell violently;" but, instead of doing that, his lordship marched up to the table saying, "I should be glad to know who it is that desires me."

Forrester was amazed, but said, "mind the lady," and then sprang to the bell himself, and rang it, and also ran to the stairs, and shouted out "the lady's maid is wanted, her mistress is ill, bring cold water, and her bottle of salts."

On his return he perceived this intruder seated by

Lady Susan's side, doing nothing, and looking very important, very much surprised and very indignant. Our old acquaintance, Lucy, came and treated the lady according to the usual routine in these cases, and in two or three minutes she showed symptoms of returning consciousness.

Forrester then took his hat, and desired Lucy to let her mistress know "that he was much shocked at her sudden attack, and waited to see that she was coming to herself, and left his compliments." In going off he took no notice of his lordship.

"Who is that person?" said my lord to Lucy.

"It's only Mr. Forrester, my lord."

"Then, who is Mr. Forrester?"

"Please, your lordship, he's a relation of Lady Bewdley."

The lady got better; and, without taking any notice of his lordship, desired her maid to help her up to her room.

The peer fumed and was going off in search of Lord Bosworth, when he met the latter entering the house, and asked very peremptorily "to have an immediate conference, touching the negotiated match with his daughter, which also had the sanction of Lady Bewdley, and his astonishment under those circumstances at finding the young lady in a very strange situation, that is, in the arms of a Mr. Forrester: do you know that person?"

"Intimately; he visits at this house, and I have often

seen him tell my daughter amusing stories and jokes that made her and me laugh ; but I never saw the slightest, the least semblance, of flirtation between them. If I had, I should have cut the matter short at once, by forbidding him the house."

" Have you any objection to do that now ?"

" None whatever ; but I must say that I think your suspicions are unfounded. However, I will do that ; and I will ask my daughter ' if she has any preference for this young fellow ; ' because, if any feeling of that kind exists, you ought to know it ; and I give you my honour you shall have a faithful account of what passes."

The noble marquess left the house, on this assurance, with his irritated feelings somewhat calmed down.

Lady Susan was really unwell at first, and went to bed for a time, but when left to quiet and repose she gradually recovered the tone of her nerves, and the reflection that her lover had emancipated himself from thralldom had a restorative and animating effect, so that when Lord Bosworth came to her room her state of health was much better than he expected to find it.

His lordship had not studied the noble science of English law, and had no skill in the process of extracting the truth, or the whole truth, out of a hapless witness, so that he learnt nothing from his poor daughter but simply " that she regarded Forrester as a kind and agreeable companion, or perhaps friend, but had never entertained the slightest idea of love, and



would have been sorry if he had intimated any feeling beyond friendship, for then she must have immediately insisted upon the termination of all intercourse between them."

Her father then made her acquainted with the scene she had not witnessed, and that she had been found by Lord Westcliff in the arms of Forrester.

"I am sure," said the lady, "that when a sense of faintness came over me I was seated in a chair by the table, and desired him to open the window,—that is all I can bring to mind,—you must enquire the rest of Frank, for I became quite insensible."

"What had been the subject of your conversation?"

"Several things; but he made me laugh about a story of a supper which he had been invited to in the city. But I enjoy so little merriment, that a small amount of wit or fun makes me laugh."

"Well, my dear, you must get some other person to entertain you for the present, for Lord Westcliff has induced me to forbid Frank from visiting at this house."

"Then pray, papa, tell his lordship, 'that if he will but keep away himself, I will forgive him for depriving me of the only visitor that I have had any amusing intercourse with since I came to London.'"

"I am shocked, my dear, that you speak with such senseless levity on so important a subject as your satisfactory settlement in life;—most satisfactory, I consider it."

“ I assure you, papa, that I regret very much indeed that I cannot think of this match as you do ; but as the matter chiefly concerns my happiness, I tell you frankly and finally, that I cannot endure the idea of an union with Lord Westcliff : he is perfectly odious to me.”

“ You make me very angry,” said his lordship, “ I shall write to Lady Bewdley to know what should be done with you.”

“ Pray, pray, papa, ask her to receive me at Maidenthorpe, or allow me to write ; I do not wish to leave you, but I have a horror of this man, a real terror, that haunts me continually in my solitude.”

“ Then, why cannot you admit the visits of Lady Wolfe ?”

“ I have told you already, my dear sir, ‘ that I think her a bad woman ;’ my aunt wrote while I was in Germany expressing something to that purport ; and once, when I hinted this to Frank, he said, ‘ it ought not to be known that I was acquainted with her.’ ”

“ Puppy,” said his lordship, and turning away from her, said “ I shall not write to Lady Bewdley for some days.”

However firmly she had maintained her position for the time, she broke down immediately that her father left, and wept grievously for a long time after his departure, and had not recovered when Lucy came into the room, and diverted her attention to another subject, for she delivered her a letter which had arrived by post.

The direction was in the handwriting of a lady she well knew, and the contents were eagerly perused.

——— Vicarage.

“DEAR LADY SUSAN,

“I propose to call at Bosworth House to-morrow morning about ten o’clock, in the hope that you may be able to favour me with a short interview, notwithstanding that the hour may appear unseasonable to you who live in the fashionable world. I beg you will not write, unless it be needful to appoint a different time of meeting.

“Believe me,

“Ever faithfully your’s,

“CLARA FOSTER.”

This letter drove away tears, and inspired her at once with a sentiment very different from the sorrow which had weighed upon her heart; and at ten o’clock the next morning she received her highly prized correspondent, who was admitted in consequence of Lucy having been informed that her mistress expected a lady at that time; and after she had entered the room and closed the door, Mrs. Foster requested Lady Susan “to lock it.”

The blushing Lady Susan embraced and kissed her visitor, and they became at once loving sisters. “My dear Mrs. Foster, your visit is in all respects a great treat to me, for my seclusion is for the most part very dreary.”

“ I hope, sweet lady,” said Mrs. Foster, “ that when I have fulfilled my embassy you may find the results of it somewhat enlivening.” She then pulled out of her pocket a large packet, and spread the papers it contained before Lady Susan—“ this, dear lady,” she said, “ is a bond for four thousand pounds, of which you may have heard my brother speak ; you see here the receipts of Mr. Hargrave for interest every half year, and for four payments of principal ; and after the last of these, which was made two days ago, the bond was delivered up cancelled, as you see.”

“ Oh !” said the lady, clasping her hands, “ how I thank God that my dear Alfred is now a free man.”

“ Yes,” said Mrs. Foster, “ and how do I and my husband thank and bless God that we are no longer a drag upon his fortunes.”

“ I don’t comprehend your remark, dear Mrs. Foster.”

“ Why, has not my brother informed you that the sum raised upon this bond was for the purpose of constituting a marriage settlement for me.”

“ No,” said Lady Susan, “ I never knew why he had got into debt, and would never have taken the liberty to ask him.”

“ Well, dear lady, the history of the matter is this ;— Foster and I had been long engaged to marry whenever we could find the means of maintaining ourselves ; but after a time there appearing no chance of his advancement in the Church, mama became desirous of breaking

the engagement, and this distressed me very much, and I lost my spirits ; and then Alfred took the matter up, and besides giving five hundred pounds of his own, he laid the case before Mr. Hargrave, and persuaded that gentleman to advance him four thousand pounds ; and then, by adding some hundreds that Foster possessed, we were enabled to make up a settlement on me of six thousand pounds in the Three per Cents ; and Foster was lucky enough to get a curacy of a hundred a year, in London, with a house, so that mama was reconciled to the match, and lives with us, which is pleasanter for her than being by herself, and her pension aids the common stock."

"Dear Mrs. Foster," said Lady Susan, "it is impossible for me to describe the delight your story has given me, for it proves how rightly I judged of the nobleness of your brother's character, and justifies my extravagant love for him."

"What you say, dear lady," said Mrs. Foster, "is a nice preface to the matters I have to submit to you. My brother has at present a flood of business poured in upon him, in consequence of the commercial crisis which has spread ruin far and wide through the country, and his commercial knowledge has led to his advice and assistance being much sought after, and this, added to his regular practice in Court, has caused him to be employed almost day and night, and therefore I am to inform you that he has appointed me his agent for engaging a suitable house and providing handsome furniture ; but, I

am sorry to say, he is quite absorbed by business engagements till the end of the Summer circuit. However the house cannot well be finished sooner, so the delay is less an object, and, in the meantime, his practice is exceedingly lucrative."

"Poor dear fellow, I wish I could work for him. Alas! he is more ambitious than I. I am sure that I should be much happier living as you do, than to be supported in splendour by his wearing himself out in this way."

"He will take a higher rank in the profession soon, dear lady, and then his labour will be much reduced. Subject to your approval, he and I have pitched upon a house in a very good street, near Russell Square, because the situation is tolerably near his chambers in the Temple."

"Ah! my dear Mrs. Foster, if you were to live in this house, and see the dullness of it, you would soon make up your mind to any change; but I can be prompted by no feeling in this matter but consideration of what would tend to the convenience of Alfred, and afford me the greatest share of his society."

"And will you trust me in the matter of furniture, paper of the walls, and so forth?"

"I rejoice that you have undertaken it, for I know how much more competent you are than I; and now, my dear Mrs. Foster, I must inform you, that I had a visit from Mr. Forrester, Frank Forrester we always called

him in the country, and after he had informed me of the excellent supper and delightful party at your house, he began to tell me the cause, and I was so agitated that just at the time of his ceasing to talk about the bonds I fainted; and, in the same moment, Lord Westcliff came into the room, and some time afterwards, papa came up to my room and inquired with great solemnity ‘whether I had any partiality for Mr. Forrester, or had given him any kind of encouragement?’ Of course I answered in the negative, with perfect truth; but he is forbidden the house notwithstanding, which I regret, because he was almost the only means of my hearing news of your brother; but as the suspicion has fallen upon *him*, *you* might feel yourself more at liberty now and then, when you could spare a little time from all your numerous avocations, to favour me with a call; but I fear our meetings can neither be frequent or of long duration.”

“You may depend upon my availing myself of every chance; but my present business is not quite finished, for I am the bearer of a little trinket which Alfred begs you to accept as being bought with the first money that he could call his own; it is the flower ‘heart’s-ease,’ and he offers it as an emblem of the feeling which the present state of his circumstances gives rise to.”

The lady kissed it tearfully, and pressed it to her heart, and assured Mrs. Foster “how perfectly she sympathized in his feelings, and that she accepted it

with the most heartfelt gratitude ;” but said also, “ that she dared not wear it at this time, and had no place in which she could keep it secure from the knowledge of her maid ; and, that as Alfred had cautioned her not to trust that woman, she must beg Mrs. Foster to take care of it for her for the present.”

They had some little talk about Mrs. Foster’s children, and other subjects that ladies can always call up for supporting conversation, and separated with the warmest mutual affection ; Mrs. Foster taking the important documents away with her, and the present of Bohun also, after a last repetition of its being kissed.

Of course, Bohun was not long without hearing every, the most minute, particular of this interview ; and his sister described the impression that the lady had made upon her so rapturously, that he was almost ashamed of abiding by his system of delay ; however, he knew that the policy would finally be so much better for his beloved, that the sense of duty prevailed and the arrangement was carried forward as he first intended, though it subjected his lady love, who had no important business to occupy *her* time and thoughts, to much anxiety and uneasiness.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

## SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT.

ABOUT a month after this Mr. Pierrepont called again, and, in consequence of his lordship being out, was introduced to Lady Susan ; in fact, the lady had ordered the servant to mention “ that Lady Susan was at home,” in case of Lord Bosworth being out, when that gentleman called.

Mr. Pierrepont therefore sent up to know “ whether her ladyship could spare time to see him ?” and he was admitted to the drawing room.

After general salutations, and an enquiry after “ Lord Bosworth,” the gentleman enquired after “ Lady Wolfe,” when Lady Susan said, “ she had not seen her since their dinner ; and, in fact, that they never met but by papa’s enforcement, and that her own wish was never to see her again.”

“ I congratulate your ladyship,” said Pierrepont, “ on possessing so much discernment.”

“ Nay,” said the lady, “ I know her by experience. Lord Bosworth entrusted her with the charge of me in a journey across the Continent to meet him, and I had to make my escape and come home alone.”

“ Well, I am glad you are aware of her real character, and can take care of yourself. And now, to refer to the subject of our late conversation, I dined with Bohun three days ago, and met Lord Bayswater, Mr. Hargrave and a Mr. Forrester, all of whom were perfectly acquainted with Lady Wolfe’s character, and wondered that Lord Bosworth admitted her into your presence ; however, as you know what she is, I will say no more.”

“ And pray,” said Lady Susan, “ how did you find your friend ?”

“ Oh ! his reception of me was quite delightful : he clasped me in his arms, and called me his preserver, and said, ‘ he had been very successful ; and that he owed all, even life itself, to me ;’ and desired that if I wanted money I would come to him, and that he had some hundreds at my command. Though I did not want money, I was much pleased with this proof of his liberality and gratitude ; so that, though the compliance was very inconvenient to me, I consented to dine with him, and met the party before mentioned.

“ As his chambers were not adapted for a party, he took me to dine with his sister, and a very choice entertainment it was ; Mr. Hargrave having assigned to *his* cuisinier the preparation of the dinner, it was all perfect, and his exquisite wines too made me drink to the verge of imprudence. I met the family, that is, his mother and Mr. and Mrs. Foster, which last is a most charming

person, and managed everything with consummate skill and taste, and I never knew so merry and agreeable a party in my life. Lord Bayswater seemed stiff at first, but he played his part at dinner with great glee, and took some share in the fun ; but I must say the two young barristers took the lead in that, and played their part to admiration, though Bohun far excelled in many respects, his knowledge being universal, while the sphere of the other was the topics of the day—the courants of the metropolis.

“ Mr. Hargrave rallied Bohun about acting in a play at Ems, and said, ‘ he gave one speech on the subject of love, with such enthusiasm as to charm all the ladies,’ and wished him to repeat it for us there ; but, he said, ‘ that it was impossible, except in the general excitement of the performance, and with the animation created by lovely women taking interest in the scene.’

“ We did not sit very late, because Mr. Hargrave was intent on having some music ; and, really, that was the most exquisite part of the entertainment, for the glees were perfect in harmony, and the voices the most melodious I ever heard. Mr. Hargrave enjoyed it all ; and, on one occasion, said, ‘ all this makes me wish myself twenty years younger.’ ‘ Make it forty, Sir, while you are about it,’ said Bohun. In short, jokes and fun were never wanting ; but at last the millionaire and the lord rode off ; and we three, after a sorrowful leavetaking of the ladies, marched to the Temple, and, it

being a bright moon and high water, we enjoyed the fresh air for some time; but, when the clock struck twelve, Bohun said, 'I am sorry to leave you, but I must be up at five, to prepare for Court to-morrow,' and so we separated in the most cordial manner.

"After he was gone, I said, 'does our friend really live in that place up two pair of stairs?' 'Yes,' said Forrester, 'and I assure you that no man in the Temple works harder, and he is getting money in proportion; it seems like parsimony, but I have always found Bohun very liberal, so I think he is ambitious, and is making a purse to enable him to get into parliament; but he can't have done much yet, for he only got out of Hargrave's debt a few months back.' 'Well,' I replied, 'I knew him well at Vienna, and from the insight I got into his character I should incline to think he is in love, and is saving money for a start in matrimony.' 'That may be,' said Forrester, 'but I never heard a word about his flame, and never noticed any symptoms of that *malady* about him,' and so we separated, though my friend offered to carry me to a place called the 'Coal Hole,' which he said was 'the very court and parliament of fun.'"

Lady Susan did her best to conceal the interest she took in this account of Bohun, and was gratified to find that her lover was in the right train to the accomplishment of his wishes and her's; when, suddenly, the narrator's true suggestion, of love being the polar star of

Bohun's career, excited suddenly a slight unwilling blush, and she tried to turn the conversation, but it would not do, the suffusion increased and spread, so that her companion could not help noticing it; and, as Mr. Pierrepont was unwilling to distress her, he merely inquired "if her ladyship would be at Lady Fairfield's fête champêtre next month, to which he was going," and wished her "good morning."

The poor lady sank on the sofa, and was relieved by shedding some tears; but, even some time after this, when she ventured to approach the glass, she perceived that the lilies and roses were not so distinctly arranged as was ordinarily the case.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE.

LADY FAIRFIELD and her lord possessed a very charming villa and grounds within a very few miles of London, and she had created a pleasing excitement in the great world of London at this time, by issuing cards for a fête champêtre on the 29th May, which happened in this year to be exactly midway between the Derby and the Ascot Cup, so that the time selected by her ladyship was very much approved, and the party became quite the fashion, and Lord Bosworth and his daughter were invited, and Lord and Lady Bayswater joined and went with them, and when they arrived they found a wonderfully gay scene.

Lady Fairfield was a person of great taste in these matters, and commanded the aid of artists capable of entering into the views of her ladyship, and arranging such an entertainment as must be deemed elegant and sumptuous by all. Lady Susan felt charmed with the scene, and her spirits were more elevated than usual; she walked with her father and tried to draw his attention to the beautiful views from the grounds, and to enliven

him, but that which cheered her depressed him, for the scene reminded him of his own ruin, and the waste of his property : they joined in with Lady Bayswater and her lord, but neither of these had much talent or vivacity, hardly even the relish for it; and poor Lady Susan sighed again and again to think how much the society of Bohun animated every scene, and what an acquisition he would have been at that time. Lady Bayswater introduced a young man of rank, who desired to dance with her, and she danced quadrilles with him; and at the end of those two quadrilles, Lord Westcliff, who had been watching her some time, came up and asked her to dance with him, and she consented, in fact, dared not do otherwise; but she said at once, "that though she danced quadrilles, she did not mean to waltz," and the marquess might have told her that he was not at all disposed to waltz either; and at the end of the two dances he took her arm, but she insisted on joining the Bayswaters, and soon after they were invited by a particular message from Lady Fairfield to join the party in the principal refreshment tent; and, luckily, Lady Susan caught sight of her father, and intreated Lord Bayswater to request him to join their party, and they all entered the tent together; but, in spite of poor Lady Susan's own schemes and wishes, Lord Westcliff forced himself into a place by her side, and was exceedingly polite and generally attentive, and was so careful not to molest her,

that she rather inclined to a more favourable opinion of him.

Previous to this party many things had happened, the particulars of which were not known to the principal characters in this history, though they were destined to produce an adventure, the sad termination of which was appointed to take place in this scene of charming intercourse, refined gaiety and elegant amusement; and it is necessary at this crisis to make our readers acquainted with them, in order that they may comprehend the succeeding part of the narrative.

Lady Susan had been presented at court by her father, when she was accompanied by Lady Bayswater and her lord; and George the Fourth, who plumed himself on his discernment of female beauty, especially when accompanied by grace and polished manners, watched her as she retired, and asked Bayswater "who was to possess that charming creature."

"Really, your majesty," said the other, "I know very little about it, but have heard that the Marquess of Westcliff has professed his admiration."

"Professed! I should think so. I will speak to Westcliff about her, but tell her father to bring her again, she will be the better for the intercourse here."

Soon after this the marquess was invited to a court dinner, and the king expatiated on the charms of Lady Susan, speaking in raptures about her loveliness, and



said "she was just the sort of woman he liked to see about court, and that the marquess should complete the alliance without loss of time."

The suggestions of royalty are exceedingly influential, particularly with military men; and the admiration of the king, and the glowing language in which he described the charms of the young lady, made a great impression on the mind of the cavalry officer; in fact, a recommendation from this very high authority was almost tantamount to an order to charge. The dragoon was perplexed. "Please your majesty," he said, "she is confoundedly awkward, I never can get along with her."

"Do you suppose that she has another flame?"

"No; I have never heard of any rival."

"Then you must spur forward, and, above all, get a clever female confederate; women understand one another better than men: do you know of any ally that she has of her own sex?"

"I met Lady Seraphina Wolfe once in dining at her father's, but young miss seemed to hate and avoid her."

"Very good; depend upon it the other hates in return, and that will render her fitter to assist you; but you must not tell her that you design matrimony: I know something of the seraph, and I think that if you merely profess a desire to obtain possession in the way of a passing amour, that angelic person will be more hearty in your cause."

The peer was then dismissed, but he left the presence of royalty in better spirits, and set off next day in search of Lady Seraphina, and the conference that he had with the lady was very agreeable to her, and she readily promised her assistance, and admitted that Lady Susan was not without beauty and had an air of innocence, which fascinated the men ; but she thought, that while they were at Ems together last Summer she had imbibed an affection for a foreigner whom they met there, and probably the lady and the stranger were now in correspondence ; but she knew that neither of them had any money. This was an additional stimulus to his lordship ; and the two took council together how his object might be accomplished, and the lady insisted that he should get into her society whenever he could and behave always with respect and distant civility, so as by degrees to render himself no longer an object of suspicion, but rather to be regarded in the light of an indifferent person, not particularly anxious about her love, yet not regardless of her beauty, so that they might meet occasionally, and wear away by degrees the fear and dislike which she felt at present.

“ The devil,” said his lordship, “ how long am I to be bored with acting such a part as this ? ”

“ That is more than I can say. I will be on the watch for the opportunity for a coup de main, but I cannot create it ; and, indeed, you must be on terms

of civil, distant sort of intercourse, or it would not be possible to carry into effect the plan I may be able to devise."

Having come to this express understanding they parted, he giving the strictest promise to carry himself towards the young lady in a manner conformable to her direction.

This commission was most acceptable to the she-Wolfe, for she hated Lady Susan much more intensely than the noble lord loved, so that the accessory was more earnest in the cause than the principal, and studied how to accomplish his wishes more assiduously than her noble friend could have anticipated: the fact being that she had a reason of her own for this. When she heard at Lord Bosworth's dinner, where she met Pierrepont, that Bohun was in England labouring at the bar, she imagined, that after her removing by any means Lady Susan, whom he evidently preferred, she might make such proposals as would be extremely seductive to a young barrister toiling hard in the drudgery which necessarily precedes the attainment of practice. Thus animated, she made as diligent inquiry as she could, with prudence and safety to herself, of the nature of different poisons—the mode of their operation—the symptoms they gave rise to—the promptitude of their effect and the degree in which they could be given without destroying life. It seemed to her that the narcotics were best suited for the object she had in view; but she

found there would be great difficulty in so adjusting the dose as to disguise the flavour and the smell, and produce an immediate and considerable effect without endangering the life of the young lady; whereby, in case of the worst, a post-mortem examination might perhaps bring home to her the proof of an intent to poison, that is, to murder, and that danger to herself was not agreeable to contemplate; but after a long period of inquiry and investigation by every means in her power, an accident, contrived perhaps by the devil, who is said to be kind to his thorough devotees, opened up to her a scheme both safe to herself and effectual for her object,—she heard of a bottle of champagne being accidentally produced at a party, so intensely iced, that all the aqueous part of the wine was frozen, and the spirituous part, which also contained the flavour, separated, so that the first person who received and drank a glass of this immediately sank down in a state of intoxication. She immediately hailed the idea of this, and assured the marquess soon afterwards that whenever the fair opportunity occurred she would assure him of the means of accomplishing his object, and without danger to himself or to her; the only two things needful being to get a bottle of wine intensely iced, and to supply it so exactly at the right moment that their victim might have the first glass out of the bottle. This was accomplished at the party, on occasion of a toast after dinner, by the adroitness of Lord Westcliff's servant, the poor lady herself thinking

it safest to take the first glass out of the bottle, and in a perfectly clean glass, for she had avoided champagne before, and only sipped some wine and water. After drinking the toast she almost instantly perceived the want of air, and felt a sense of faintness, and rose to get out of the tent. Lord Westcliff offered his arm, and she was too confused to do more than lean on him, and the Lady Wolfe took hold of her on the other side, and being both tall people they contrived to keep the lady apparently on her legs, and Lady Wolfe said to Lord Bosworth, "It's nothing; the young lady must get into the air and sit on a bench for some time, she will soon be well;" and his lordship was drawn off by a led captain to a tent where there were cards, and in order the more certainly to detain him the captain began by losing ten or twelve guineas; but after the lapse of half an hour Lord Bosworth was the general object of search, and when, after that time, he was drawn out of the tent, he was informed that his daughter was alarmingly ill, that she had been picked up off the ground by a waiter or stranger, and brought in doors in a state of perfect insensibility; and when he got into the house he found that she was on a sofa in an inner room, supported by servants, who tried in vain to restore her; but a doctor had been sent for, and when this gentleman arrived he relieved her by the use of the stomach pump, and Lord Bosworth was able to return home with his daughter alive, but very ill, and he could not help remarking that

in the whole of the crowd he saw nothing of the marquess and the Lady Wolfe, who had carried his daughter out of the tent under their joint care. Nor did he hear any more of these kind guardians of his daughter for some time.

Poor Lady Susan passed a sad night, she scarcely knew what had happened, but she had a feeling of distress and disappointment, and something like disgrace, that cut her to the heart, and during the night she wept a great deal, and slept very little.

About half-past ten o'clock the following morning, Lucy came up to inform her mistress "that Mrs. Foster had called to inquire after her," and the poor lady sprang at the idea of having a kindred bosom into which she might pour out her griefs and alarms, and they were soon locked in each other's arms, and Mrs. Foster trying to console her, and reminding her "that she had lost nothing, and that she trusted she had suffered no real injury."

"I do not believe that I have, my dear; but what horrid disgrace, almost the first time that I appear in society to be exposed in such a shocking and unaccountable manner."

"Dear lady," said Mrs. Foster, "I think it is easy to account for it, for I make no doubt at all that what you drank was drugged with some potent narcotic. Who was near you at the time?"

"Lord Westcliff had forced himself into a place by my side."

“And Lady Wolfe, was not she at hand somewhere?”

“Yes, I have a faint recollection of her voice, and also that she dragged me along.”

“But still you are safe and uninjured finally, though these wicked people seem to have had you in their power.”

“I cannot perceive that I have sustained any injury, but my feelings have been most painfully affected.”

“Then let us on our bended knees return thanks to God for your preservation, for I think we cannot be too grateful for his safeguard over you.”

When they had repeated this thanksgiving together with all their hearts, Lady Susan said, “you have given me great comfort, I am much relieved by the feeling of such protection overshadowing me.”

“My dear lady,” said Mrs. Foster, “do not you say your prayers daily?”

“Certainly.”

“Well, then, you of course feel when you are uttering the words, ‘deliver us from evil,’ that you are expressing yourself precisely in the terms dictated by our Saviour himself, and you must be sensible that those words are not vain and meaningless.”

“I see it now,” said Lady Susan, “you have made me less unhappy; but tell me how this matter strikes dear Alfred.”

“I had but short intercourse with him; but *he* threw out the idea of narcotic poison, which I mentioned to you, his great anxiety is to guard you against alarm and

low spirits and despondency, and he says ‘that you must imagine him on his knees before you begging earnestly that you will not let your courage fail you.’”

“Indeed, Mrs. Foster, I will try with all my heart to follow your and his advice, but the more you can give me of your company the better I shall be able to sustain myself,—when may I hope to see you again?”

“Why the day after to-morrow I can spare time, if you think your spirits will be somewhat revived.”

“Oh! I will be very good by that time, and not distress you by my vain complaints.”

They parted very affectionately soon after this; and Lady Susan, in thinking over what had passed, wondered that she had not inquired more particularly of Mrs. Foster by what means she and her brother had become informed of what passed at the fête.

Lord Bosworth thought it worth while to go upstairs to see Lady Susan, for he was very indignant about it, and began to repent that he had trusted his daughter in the hands of such unprincipled people as he knew Lord Westcliff and Lady Wolfe to be. He found, as he expected would be the case, that his poor daughter had shed many tears and was very desolate; he did and said what he could to comfort her, and remarked that of course there could be nothing serious the matter, and made her dry her tears, and at last prevailed upon her to take a walk with him in the Green Park, and the air was so reviving that she lounged about a good while, at



times taking a seat, and finally returned home rather revived. Her father was surprised to find no cards of inquiry on his return, and it led him to the same conclusion as his daughter, that her companions had attempted something very abominable, though they had by some means or other been defeated.

The next day was passed in the same manner, and to the indignation of Lord Bosworth, neither Lord Westcliff or Lady Wolfe called or sent. In the evening, the former went about among the clubs, and there he heard that Westcliff was laid up very ill, and could not even be spoken to, a fact which in the present state of his feelings gave him pleasure, but still it afforded no clue to the treatment of his daughter while she was absent from him at Lady Fairfield's party. His curiosity (his lordship would have called it anxiety about his darling child) was much excited, but he did not like to go to the Wolfe. It was not only contrary to etiquette, but he knew that he could not expect a true version from her, and it did cross his mind that he was to blame for not looking after his daughter when she had no female protectress but that infamous woman.

The following morning Mrs. Foster was punctual to her time, and Lady Susan received her as warmly as ever, and mentioned "that she had walked out each day with her father, but that nothing had transpired touching the sad adventure, and that neither Lord Westcliff or Lady Wolfe had ventured to call, and that she felt

better though her spirits continued as depressed as ever, and would be so till she knew the truth about this vile usage of herself."

"But," said Mrs. Foster, "are your nerves in a fit state to hear the truth, for I know more about the matter now than I did when I saw you last."

"Oh! pray tell me all you have heard, my dear Mrs. Foster, nothing will do me so much good, and I have courage to listen to all, be it ever so bad."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Foster, "I will tell you all; but as regards yourself, my dear, there is nothing at all distressing but what you know already. The first item in my budget is a letter from Pierrepont that my brother received about a week ago, which is as follows:—

"DEAR BOHUN,

"I am off to ——— at no notice at all, except just sufficient to enable me to run down to Somersetshire to say 'how d'ye do and good bye,' all in a breath, so I can't call to say how delighted I was with your party and your charming sister, and to bid you all farewell, perhaps for a long time. I enclose with this a ticket for myself for Lady Fairfield's fête, and a note to her, explaining why I transfer the ticket to you, a better dancer than myself, &c. &c. Go, for Lady Susan is to be there, and in talking about you the other day I caused an awful tell-tale blush on the lovely creature's face. Upon my word, young fellow, you fly at high game, nothing less than countesses; however, this time I say

‘God speed ye,’ for it would be shocking to have such an angel as this sacrificed to that ‘Moloch’ Westcliff. Go, for she may want a guardian. It is expected that there will be great licence; they talk of old Rabelais’ maxim, ‘fais comme voudras,’ being the order of the day. How wonderful that we *moral English* should think of such things. Au revoir, some years hence. A thousand loves to your angel sister, one or two to her husband, and real kind remembrances to the merchant emperor and to Forrester. I should have given him the ticket, but I thought you would perhaps take most particular care about Lady Susan, &c. &c. &c.”

“ I suppose the story about the blush is true ? ”

“ I confess,” said Lady Susan, “ I was taken quite unawares by something he said about your brother; but how cunning these men are ! ”

“ He is a diplomatist, my dear; and they are bound to see, and hear and feel every thing, and to flatter every one.”

“ I suppose so.”

“ But there is no flattery in his compliments to you. However, this is not the story. My brother wakened up immediately, and got a dress, and went of course; and it so happened that when he arrived the lady was too much taken up with royal dukes for him to approach her, and he did not deliver his letter; but he went about the grounds and noticed all the shrubberies and private

walks, and then he danced a quadrille, and to save himself from being known or recognized by many acquaintances perhaps, he wore light blue spectacles. After he had reconnoitred the grounds he was pretty quiet till the time of filling the chief tent with the élite of the party, and when he saw them being gathered together towards it he went up into the grand drawing-room, which overlooked the whole scene, and placed himself at a window, not immediately in front of the grand entrance to the tent, but so that he could view it anglewise, and for a length of time he carefully observed the bees as they entered or left the hive, and finally he saw your exit between the two fiends mentioned by yourself the other day, and he continued watching till he saw them enter by an alley on the left side of the gravel walk, some distance off, and dragging you as it were to a seat; but soon he saw the Wolfe come out and turn back, and, after looking about her, walk briskly forward towards the extremity of the grounds. That was the signal of danger to him, and he was soon in the shrubbery, hurrying along a private gardener's path to the spot where they had entered, but nobody was there or near it, and he pushed forward, and luckily he caught this guide, a riband bow, which had been torn off your dress in hurrying you along. On he went, till he saw the marquess, and as he got near him he saw your ladyship on the ground near his feet; he was still cautious in his approach to the villain, but when he got to the right

distance for his spring, he gave him such a blow on the side of his head as not only knocked him down, but entirely stunned him. He then took your ladyship up, and ran with you to the house and told the people how to treat you, and drove off in his own fly to get a medical practitioner with a stomach pump, whom he was fortunate in obtaining in a neighbouring populous village. He then lingered about till he saw Lord Bosworth carry you off somewhat restored; and there is an end of my tale, except only that he saw nothing more of the Wolfe or the marquess."

"Oh! my dear, how will it be possible for me to thank or repay your dear brother for his more than parental care of me?"

"Dear lady, he has had some earnest already in the double pleasure of giving his rival a good knock, and of clasping to his heart the object of his adoration."

"Ah!" said Lady Susan, with a sigh, "but insensible."

"Shall I tell him of that sigh?" said Mrs. Foster.

"Ah! fais comme voudras. But, to turn over a new leaf, tell me, my dear friend, what is to be done?"

"My dear Lady Susan, I come charged with the opinion of my brother; perhaps you would like to abide by that."

"Implicitly. I have reason to trust him, for I have found him always right."

"Well, my dear, he takes the same view as yourself,

and thinks that you should write to your aunt, tell her of the shocking treatment you have met with, that your father sees no society, and you have no carriage, and implore her to take you back to Maidenthorpe, where you are always happy, or that you shall die if you are confined to London; and request that she will send Mike up, and to bring five pounds to help out your means; and my brother sends you thirty pounds in this packet, and you will get home safely under the care of Mike, and Lord Bosworth will have no money to find for the journey."

"What an admirable arrangement! no one but your brother could have done all this for me: how am I ever to repay him?"

"He will take you yourself, my dear, and think himself a thousand times overpaid; but I must go immediately, or my husband will get no dinner."

"A thousand thanks, and good bye, dear, kind, precious Mrs. Foster, and tell Alfred my heart is full, but I can express no more."

Lady Susan wrote to her aunt the same night, and when she next saw her father, she told him that she felt it impossible ever to hold any more intercourse with Lady Wolfe, and that she had written to her aunt to beg her to take her in at Maidenthorpe, for she should die if she had not a change of air and scene."

The next day Lady Fairfield called, and the visit was kindly meant, for that lady had been much shocked to

hear of anything so distressing happening to such a charming young creature, and she did everything she could to console her, and said that she hoped she would entirely get the better of it, for beautiful as she was her absence would be an irreparable loss to the beau monde.

The ladies parted very good friends, but Lady Susan said that her return to Yorkshire for the present was quite determined on.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE GLORIOUS UNCERTAINTY.

LADY BEWDLEY had found it sadly dull at Maiden-thorpe, where, it must be admitted, she had little peace, for the demands for money either by the peer or the canon were incessant; therefore, she readily acquiesced in the proposal of her niece, and Mike came up, and made his way to Bohun, even before he went to Bosworth House, and there he was informed "that the dear Lady Susan was not safe; that it was all starvation and misery at her father's; besides which, the only woman that Lord Bosworth had introduced his daughter to, and also sent her on to the Continent with, was a disreputable person called Lady Wolfe; and that if he, Bohun, had not been dodging them in disguise wherever they went, this devil would have ruined Lady Susan, and had a pleasure in doing it; and, that in spite of this, she was still obliged to associate with her, and therefore Bohun didn't wonder that the young lady wanted to get into a place of security."

Poor Mike felt sincerely for his young mistress; but Bohun said, "you and I must confine ourselves to business. Lady Susan has money for this journey, but you



must say to my lord, ‘ that Lady Bewdley has given you money to pay the expenses of the journey, but she has tied you up so tight that you will have hardly enough to pay for the night on the road ;’ for his lordship is so poor that he would screw money out of you, or his daughter, if he could.”

Mrs. Foster called to bid her “ good bye,” and recommended her to make Mike her banker at once ; and, sure enough, the old lord tried to extort money from each separately ; and, when he heard there was a doubt of the money being sufficient, he wanted to detain the party, but Mike said, “ his credit was good on the road, and he would be bound to get his young mistress safe home ;” so that, owing to Bohun’s precautions, the dear young lady arrived at home, as she called Maidenthorpe, with some pounds in her pocket.

She found all friends, including her aunt, glad of her return, though the old lady was disappointed that she had not brought a marquess in her train ; but, at the same time, her aunt was much depressed ; she had had nothing but vexation, and though the vexation arose almost entirely from parting with money which she never could use herself, yet, as the expenditure was not productive of the expected fruits, or in fact of any fruit, it made the old lady very unhappy.

The last claim had been from the Honorable and Reverend Canon Altham who, as before mentioned, had been made defendant in an action of ejectment, which

had reference to the only estate he possessed, consisting of a farm of land, rack rented of course, which produced for him, or his creditors, upwards of 600*l.* per annum. The Reverend Gentleman made light of this for some time, having the most implicit reliance on the validity of his title, and he therefore wondered that no respectable solicitor in York would undertake his defence, unless they had security for the payment of all costs. Now the gentlemen in question adopted this course for three reasons; first, "the glorious uncertainty" which men of experience never lose sight of; secondly, the conviction established in the city of York that no reliance could be placed on the statements of the Honorable and Reverend defendant; and lastly, the certainty, that if defeated, no one would reimburse them the costs of the action. He therefore went begging to Lady Bewdley, and stated the danger he was exposed to, merely from want of means to defend his right, and the lady was at last so touched that she sent for Mr. Holroyd to consult him on the subject, when he told her "that if she gave him authority to defend this action, he would do it, though with reluctance, because he could give her no assurance of the result; and, in fact," he said, "there really was not time to investigate the case, as he ought to have done, and he dreaded leading her ladyship blindfold into a great and as he feared useless expense;" however, she was bent on saving the estate if possible, according to the vulgar proverb, inclined "to throw good money after bad."

In the course of his return to York he considered that this property must of course be mortgaged, and, when he got back, he applied to the defendant to know the place of deposit of the deeds, and found that they were at Swan's bank, to afford security for various advances of money, amounting in the whole to above four thousand pounds.

Mr. Holroyd therefore went to the bank, and said to the partners, "I wonder that you do not defend this action, for your solicitor, Mr. Dudley, must know more about the title than anybody, and, in fact, the legal estate is vested in you." He persuaded them to send for the solicitor, and, after a little discussion, he asked that gentleman "what the costs of defending the action might amount to?"

"Why," said Mr. Dudley, "I think it will cost my clients four hundred pounds."

"Then," said Mr. Holroyd, "will you undertake 'bonâ fide' to fight this in the best manner, if I obtain for you an undertaking, on the part of Lady Bewdley, to pay four hundred pounds; and this I propose, because you must admit that your clients are the proper people to do it; and, I think, they have secured Brougham by a special retainer. So that in the end it was agreed "that he should get her undertaking to that purport, in which case they would give theirs to defend the action."

This caused him another journey to Maidenthorpe; and Mr. Holroyd convinced Lady Bewdley "that this

was the only way, that it would be less expensive to her than any other, and was most likely to be successful, for Mr. Brougham was an admirable leader, and a favourite with juries, and that the attorney of Messrs. Swan, who held the deeds, was very competent to conduct the defence, and he promised that he would watch the case and be in court and have an eye on the proceedings;" so she consented to let him have the undertaking required on her part to put the train in movement.

Bohun stuck to the law; but as the money came in abundantly, he spent it freely on his house and furniture, and fitted up every part in a way that he thought must make it agreeable to its future mistress; but the secret was kept by him and Mrs. Foster, so that it might be an entire surprise on all his acquaintance; but he wished to see Lord Bosworth again, in order to ratify the invitation to Conquest Hall, and therefore he sent to Forrester, and told him "he was tired, and meant to have a whitebait dinner at Blackwall, and wished him to ask that poor wretched man Lord Bosworth, and he would get Foster, and the four would go down in a wherry, with oars and an awning, from Tower Stairs, and he would order the watermen and provide a suitable boat."

"But how can I go?" said Forrester, "the old goose has forbidden me his house, by the request of Westcliff."

"Pooh, Lady Susan's gone to the north, and as for Westcliff he's on the sick list, and if you tell Lord Bosworth some story about a wager dinner, he'll be glad

enough to go, for I guess that in the general way he's on very short allowance. By-the-bye, have you heard anything of Westcliff?"

"Very little; I saw the she-Wolfe the other day, and she says 'he can sit up in his chair, and take more nourishing food than has been allowed him, but he's much reduced;' but she did not say what had been his ailment."

"Well, then, *he* won't challenge you for calling."

So the party was made up, and very pleasant it was, and they had a great deal of fun, and some duets towards the end, and the poor wretched lord had not enjoyed anything so much for a long time, and he again renewed his invitation to Bohun to come and see him in September at Conquest Hall; and Bohun and Forrester saw the old lord safely home in a carriage which Bohun hired for taking them back to London.

In rowing down to Blackwall a little incident occurred which produced some trifling effect on the progress of the story:—Just below Greenwich they observed a very smart well rigged sloop yacht, lying at anchor, "whose yacht is that?" said his lordship to the waterman.

"The Marquess of Westcliff's, sir," said the man.

"Oh!" said his lordship, "I should like to go on board of her;" and accordingly they pulled alongside, and Lord Bosworth sending up his card, they all went on board, and most of them went to examine the accom-

modation below ; but Bohun stopped on deck, and the Master, leaving the gentlemen in the charge of his wife, soon joined him, and when he came up Bohun said, “ I see, Captain Benbow, that you don’t remember me — Mr. Bohun.” The other of course expressed his joy at their meeting again, and his gratitude to Bohun for the services he had rendered him.

“ How long have you been lying here ?” said the latter.

“ Indeed, sir, it must be eight or nine months.”

“ Why, my good man, this will spoil you ; you’ll be no better than a lubberly long-shore man, in a stiff breeze in the Channel.”

“ Yes, sir, I tell my mistress as it ain’t right, but you see it’s comfortable to her.”

“ Aye, and high wages for doing nothing, I suppose.”

“ No, indeed, sir, I can’t get anything ; I am more than six months behind and getting into debt.”

“ Then, my good friend, you must get out of this directly ; but do not talk now, come to my chambers by eight o’clock to-morrow morning, and I will tell you how to proceed.”

The party came up very soon, and the wife with them, and her husband informing her who he was she thanked our hero, with tears, in the most affectionate manner, and, when he had pretty well subdued this, the poor woman said “and, dear me, sir, how is that dear sweet handsome lady that was with you?”

Forrester caught this, and said, "Oh ! oh ! I thought, master Alfred, there must be some dear little girl in the bush somewhere."

"Upon my word, Mrs. Benbow," said Bohun, "I have not seen her for a long time, but hope and believe she is very well. But come, my lord, if you please we will go, for the tide is running down, and we ought to have had high water at Blackwall;" so they got away, but Forrester remarked and remembered the little confusion that Bohun had betrayed.

The next morning Bohun made Skinner take Benbow to some clients of his, Messrs. Hatham and Squeeze, of Hebrew descent, and having told them it was a case of recovering wages due, he required them to give an undertaking that Benbow should be put to no expense in the matter, and then he let them loose against the lord, and in three weeks it was made *all right*, and their "little bill" paid into the bargain by the noble defendant; and this being the height of the yachting season, Benbow soon got an appointment.

About a week after this Forrester caught Bohun at his chambers to open up this love matter, which had dwelt in his mind since the Blackwall day; but *now* the giver of the fête was entirely aplomb.

"Bohun," said his friend, "I have been thinking over that incident in the yacht, and I'll be hanged if I don't think you are in love with Lady Susan Altham."

“Not to be wondered at if I were, considering your eternal eulogies on her beauty and amiable character.”

“No, no, that’s nothing to do with it.”

“Well, my friend, supposing it to be so, are you come to challenge me for my misfortune?”

“Your misfortune, indeed, I think you have persuaded her to love you in return.”

“Much obliged to you for this agreeable intelligence; then, I suppose, I shall only have to challenge, or endure the challenge, of Westcliff.”

“No, I don’t think she will have him.”

“Then, my kind friend, are you my rival?”

“No.”

“Then why this hubbub? Look at my work for the northern circuit, does that look like a journey of philandering? and look at this action which I have to conduct at York,” showing an enormous brief, *Ruddiford v. Altham*, “an ejectment to turn the Reverend Canon out of his landed property,—will that aid my wooing? Then, look here, a case in which Lord Bosworth, for the sum of four hundred pounds in hand, paid to him by Mr. Isaacs, agrees to make over all the plate, jewels, pictures, furniture, fixtures and household stuff at Conquest Hall to the said Mr. Isaacs; it comes from good clients of mine, Messrs. Hatham and Squeeze, also of the Jewish persuasion. This is not to take effect till the 8th September next, and that, I suppose, will be the signal for the total break up of his lordship.”



“ But can my lord do what he undertakes ? ”

“ A very pertinent question, brother Forrester ; I have expressed my doubts to these gentlemen, and told them ‘ that in the course of my practice I had seen a settlement by the present lord, and it may very probably have included these things, and they must get me a copy of it before I could give an opinion ; ’ but my clients told me ‘ that Chevron and Pale would not give a copy, ’ but said ‘ that all the property was up the lane. ’ ”

“ What lane,” said Forrester.

“ Why, the expression struck me at first ; but he meant in Chancery.”

“ Very good,—Chancery Lane.”

“ Yes,” said Bohun, “ it reminds me of Æsop’s story of the sick lion, and reynard remarking that in the path or ‘ lane,’ leading to the lion’s den, along which beasts had gone to inquire after their king, the foot prints were all in one direction : so sly reynard, neglecting etiquette, turned back.”

“ Very good, and the lion’s no more sick than he was in the time of Æsop ; then did you advise ? ”

“ No, I did not ; and Mr. Isaacs wanted me to return the guinea fee, and was much affronted that I did not do so, and he quoted ‘ Mr. *Squeege’s* ’ opinion that I ought.”

“ And do you think this wretched bargain will go on ? ”

“ Most likely, the Jew will endeavour to reduce the amount of the advance to three hundred pounds ; but I think he is too greedy to break it off.”

“ Poor Lady Susan,” said Forrester.

“ Ah ! ah ! so independent of the terror of my love, you see there are other things to be alarmed about for the poor dear young lady. But the truth is, Forrester, she has a good rich prudent old aunt, who loves her, and though her father will rob her to the utmost of his power, she will take care of her, and I don’t see that there is so much to distress yourself about.”

“ When do you set off on the circuit ?”

“ I must be at York this day week, and have plenty to do before I go.”

“ I understand the hint ; good bye.”

The great day, the day of the trial of this ejectment cause at York, arrived ten days after this, having been expressly appointed, so that the whole day might be devoted to it. Of course the court was full, and Lady Susan would have liked to be present, but Lady Bewdley did not approve of it, and she paid the expenses of Mr. Oakley going over in a one-horse chaise, in order that he might inform her that same night of the result of the trial. Bohun had worked through this case in the previous Winter, and sifted every nicety of it, and had provided himself with every document, and the proof of every fact that could illustrate the history of this estate for the last sixty years, and Yorkshire being a registration county, he was enabled to verify “that the ancestor of the defendant, from whom it had descended in a comprehensive legacy to the father of the Canon, never

was possessed of this property in fee," for he had only held it as trustee for a party who died forty-six years before the commencement of this action, and from whom there was distinct proof that the plaintiff was lineally descended, and that he was the only surviving heir. The case was tedious, on account of the necessity of witnesses to identify the property, and of a great many documents and parochial books being exhibited and authenticated, also copies of the county register ; but Bohun broke the neck of the case by setting out with the clear indisputable proof, that forty-six years ago, Mr. Bolton, the maternal ancestor of the present defendant, from whom the estate came, held it only in trust. Owing to the extreme care bestowed on the preparation of the case, and the accuracy in verifying all the proofs, and the judicious sequence in which they were presented to the jury, it was brought thoroughly home to their minds that every link in the chain of proof was sound, and without flaw ; so that in spite of the fine oratory of Mr. Brougham, and his very splendid efforts to produce confusion in the array of documents, facts and figures, he sat down without shaking the conviction of the jury, and he felt it, for there was one very acute man in the jury box, and whenever Mr. Brougham fell foul of any particular document or register, this person always desired to see it, which for the most part entirely foiled him. The judge who heard the cause put it very fairly and fully before the

jury, and left them to form their opinion, but at the same time said, "they would no doubt take into their consideration that the party in possession had not attempted to establish his right by any sort of counter proof." The jury retired for a few minutes, and returned with a verdict for the plaintiff, which was received with applause by the audience generally, though the judge exerted himself greatly to preserve order.

Mr. Oakley did not return from York in time for dinner, though they waited, and tea was concluded without any news, and it was not till past ten o'clock that his chaise drove into the entrance court, and the servants and Lady Susan flew to meet him. When instantly the monosyllable "Lost!" cast a gloom over the household, and poor Lady Bewdley was much struck and downcast.

"Can there be a new trial?"

"I fear not with better hopes of success, my lady. I overheard a brief conversation between Mr. Brougham and Mr. Holroyd, and he said, 'it had been wonderfully well fought, he never saw a case better got up in his life, and he thought Bohun would keep his verdict.'"

"Bohun, was that the man who was brought to this house wounded?"

"The same, my lady."

"A pretty way of showing his gratitude."

"Why, my lady, it is the invariable custom of the Bar to act for the party who first engages them by a

retaining fee, and I, on the first bruit of this action, asked Mr. Holroyd 'to retain Mr. Bohun,' but he said, 'that the plaintiffs had engaged him the moment they brought the action,' and Mr. Holroyd said the same to Mr. Brougham, who replied, 'that it had been a great misfortune for defendant, for he did not think any other man of talent would have expended so much labour and time as he had in getting up the case and conducting the trial.' I then asked 'if the success was owing to these personal exertions only;' to which he replied, 'Mr. Holroyd will tell you the importance of the first blow. Plaintiff has got a verdict with costs; the case was fully argued and the law fairly put to the jury, notwithstanding I shoved in a few objections by way of obstruction. The Court will be unwilling to disturb that verdict, except for stronger reasons than I have discovered in the course of the trial, and, supposing you got it, look what an up-hill job you have, and how deadly fatal another verdict against you would be. Can't you make terms? I should be inclined to talk confidentially to Bohun.'"

"What, the adverse counsel!" said Lady Bewdley.

"They both agreed, my lady, that he was a strictly honourable and fair man, and when I left Mr. Holroyd, he said, 'he had two causes to-morrow, but they stood early for hearing, and he thought he might be able to get over here by one o'clock to-morrow to talk to your ladyship,' for time presses."

“Well,” said Lady Bewdley, “this surpasses anything I ever heard of about law and lawyers! Did Mr. Brougham do anything in the conduct of the case to bear out his reputation?”

“Oh! he showed the greatest ability, nothing escaped him, and he tried to assume a superiority over Bohun, but in that I must admit he failed, for Bohun met anything overbearing with a cool and haughty indifference, not to say scorn, that showed he was not to be intimidated.”

“Susan, my dear,” said her ladyship, “no more of this to-night. Send for Mr. Hallifax to give me something that may afford me a night’s rest, if possible.”

Mr. Oakley was glad enough to get home, but he made Lady Susan the promise of a visit next morning in order to talk over this subject with her calmly, and prepare for what might happen in the course of the day.

The conversation which took place in the morning between the lady and the clergyman was nearly as follows: “Well, my dear lady, I have come here according to my promise, and brought Mrs. Oakley with me, so that one tale may do for both of you, for I really was too tired last night to tell her anything except the result. Our friend, Mr. Bohun, being for the plaintiff, commenced, and in a speech of between two and three hours, but without wasting a word, explained to the jury the facts of the case, and read the extracts of wills, certificates, extracts from the county register and other

documentary evidence that he relied upon for establishing his case, and explained what he expected to prove by the witnesses who would be brought forward, and all those parchment and paper writings on which he founded his claim were open to the inspection of the counsel on the other side ; he then concluded by a concise, but very impressive, recapitulation of the heads of the case, which were set forth in perfectly logical order, and he wound up with a luminous summary of the evident and (as he said) ‘indisputable title of the plaintiff to be admitted to possession of the estate.’ I was so interested in the result, that at the moment my feelings were too much excited for me to advert to the power and skill he had displayed, but I did feel the exquisite tact with which he coolly and plainly conveyed to the minds of the jury that view of the case which exactly suited the interest of his client. Then followed the examination of witnesses, and the proof of all these documents. After that followed the speech of Mr. Brougham, who made the most skilful efforts to divert the minds of the jury from the view of the case which had been so ably put before them by Mr. Bohun, but I saw that he made no impression, in fact, I thought it very plain that they had made up their minds, and when the judge came to sum up, he rather strengthened the case of the plaintiff.”

“Then my uncle has lost the estate,” said Lady Susan.

“Not exactly, my dear lady, for when I put the same question to Mr. Holroyd, he said, ‘pooh, it was gone from him before, for the interest on the mortgage swallowed up all the rents;’ and though your aunt, Lady Bewdley, very handsomely advanced four hundred pounds to give him the chance of a verdict, I understand that the costs of the present action will amount to much more, and which the defendants must pay.”

“Then my uncle is ruined,” said Lady Susan.

“I apprehend that he cannot be deprived of the income from his stall,” said Mr. Oakley, “and his wife had a settlement of three hundred pounds a year, I believe: so that he can live.”

“I don’t much think he will get any more from my aunt.”

“I should think not,” said Mrs. Oakley, “for he misled the old lady cruelly about the character of Mr. Bohun.”

Mr. Holroyd arrived about the time he was expected, and brought the matter before Lady Bewdley without delay, and explained the situation of affairs; and in doing so, was led to express “how much he regretted the loss of Bohun to their cause,” adding “that on the very first whisper of the affair, he would have given Bohun a special retainer; but he was told Mr. Altham did not desire his assistance: and he now understood that plaintiffs had retained him in the outset.”

“And I admire Altham for it,” said her ladyship, “I



should not have liked to owe the preservation of the estate to the personal exertions of that man."

"Indeed, my lady, your view and that of your brother in law on this point are diametrically opposed to all my experience, to all I see, to all I hear, and to the universal feeling in his favour, which accords so perfectly with my own."

"Then, sir, you do not know the man."

"Excuse me, my dear lady, I have known him many years, and employed him, of late, whenever I can get him. The bar is an arena where everything about a man becomes known, and no one can show his face in Court if there be a stigma on his honour. You are influenced, and have been acted upon, by some strange evidence, which would be negatived by every person who has the honour of Mr. Bohun's acquaintance; and you must forgive me for expressing my amazement at this, considering the important service he rendered you, at the risk of his own life."

"Service to me, sir! What, in the name of heaven, do you mean?"

Poor Mr. Holroyd was amazed, and began to doubt whether her ladyship was in a right state of mind for discussing important business, but he answered, "I allude, my lady, to the hazard from which Mr. Bohun preserved you, of having your carriage and horses, with Lady Susan, yourself and your servants all dashed to pieces down the precipitous side of Trapstone Hill."

“For heaven’s sake, my dear Mr. Holroyd, are you sincere in conjuring up this horrible image?”

Mr. Holroyd determined to bring the matter to issue at once, so rang the bell, and desired the servant to “request the Lady Susan to attend her aunt immediately,” and in the meantime there was a pause in the discussion and both parties remained in a state of amazement. Of course on the arrival of Lady Susan she had to make her aunt acquainted with the facts, and explain that she had been kept in the dark before on account of the strict injunction from Mr. Hallifax, but when Lady Bewdley insisted on an exact description of the affair, the young lady, expressing her own inability, told her aunt it was necessary to call in Mike.

Mike shone in this description, for this was by no means the first or perhaps the hundredth time of his relating the surprising adventure ; but he had not learned to depart from truth, and the presence of Lady Susan made him very cautious in his narration, but he detracted nothing from the glory of our hero ; and finally, her ladyship, staring at her niece in amazement, asked “if this was all true?”

“Perfectly so, my dear aunt.”

“And did you consider this desperate man, to whom we owe so much, a gentleman?”

“My dear aunt, I can only confirm your experience : you thought he was a gentleman when he was here ; and Mr. and Mrs. Oakley, and I and every one who

had intercourse with him was, I think, sensible of it."

Mike thought he might venture upon this opening to offer his testimony, and accordingly remarked, "God bless you, my lady, Mr. Bohun is as true a gentleman as I am a coachman."

"You may understand your own employment, Mike, but how dare you presume to judge what constitutes the character of a gentleman?"

"Why, my lady, I was on the road a good while, you know, and there we used to see all sorts, and we knew directly what they was. It stands to reason, a gentleman as is a real gentleman knows it his self, and its no trouble to him to make other people know it, and he is civil and quiet; whereas them as has only got money and fine clothes, and ain't real gentlemen, swagger about and bully, and give themselves airs, and speak roughly to them as is below 'em, and sometimes swear at them. We know 'em, my lady, and Mr. Bohun is one of the right sort, that you may depend upon."

"Very good," said the lady with a slight smile, "and I suppose you got a handsome tip when he went away?"

"Well, my lady, I will tell you about that, Mr. Bohun sent for me, and he said 'Mike, you have been very kind and obliging to me, and rendered me great assistance and many services, and now I am going I wish to express my gratitude, and beg you to accept this little token,' and this was a five pound note; and I stared at

him some time, and drew a long breath, and then I said, 'No, Mr. Bohun,' I says, 'you saved my life, and if I was to take your money I hope God would forgive me, but I should never forgive myself.'"

"Well done, Mike," said Mr. Holroyd, "set a gentleman to find a gentleman, my lady." He was, in fact, much pleased that her ladyship had given attention to Mike's plain-spoken sensible statement, because nothing could be better adapted to lead her mind to the right feeling of the case; and after his remark, there was a momentary silence, and which Mike broke by saying, "Mr. Bohun, a gentleman, indeed, why I knowed he was a gentleman afore ever I see him."

"Confound you, you fool," said the lawyer in an under-tone, "you have made your case, and now you are going to spoil it."

Mike was steadfast, and the lady perceiving the lawyer's annoyance, and hoping to abate something of his triumph, said, "come, Mr. Holroyd, let's hear all that your Lord Chesterfield has got to say."

Mike, then addressing him, said, "if you please, sir, might I trouble you to let me have the use of this here sofy?" and the lawyer got up in a sulky manner, and removed to the window seat. Mike then drew the sofa opposite to his mistress, but at some distance, and in front of it he placed on the left one chair on its legs, and on the right another chair lying down, and he got three cushions and placed them on the floor a little in advance

of the chairs. "Now, my lady," he said, standing directly in front of the sofa, as if he had just risen from it, "this sofy's my box, this chair on the left is my horse Rodney, that kept his legs all thro' like a Briton, and this here's my other horse Monkey, that wouldn't stand quiet, but reared and kicked and came down entangled with the harness, and couldn't move; indeed, it's my belief he was too much frighten'd; well, now them cushions was three men, two of them I'd seen, and thank God I shall never see 'em again; but the other was Mr. Bohun, and he'd come from behind the lamp with a lunge at the highwayman, and stabb'd him, and the fellow got Mr. Bohun under; so I knew by the lamps and the lightening, my lady, as they was three men, and that's all, and just then we'd one of them dreadful flashes, and the thunder neck and neck with it, and it rattled backwards and forwards from one hill to the other a long time, the rain pouring down by pailfuls, till at last there came a lull, and then I heer'd a voice say, 'Coachman.' 'Aye, aye,' says I. 'Tell that young man who sits by your side to jump down and chock the off fore-wheel, and then you may tell the ladies they're quite safe, and after that come down here and help me.' 'That's the ticket, Josh,' says I,—'jump down and do what the gentleman bids you,' and he didn't much fancy the job, and says, 'how do you know as he's a gentleman?' 'Why,' says I, 'you fool, who do you think as was laying there in the mud, half drowned,

and wounded, and dying, would ha' thought about ladies if he hadn't been a gentleman his-self.' 'By Gholes, you're right,' says Josh, and down he got; and by the same token, I says, 'take care of his heels, Josh, but if you can get that offside trace'"—

"That's enough, my man," said Mr. Holroyd, "never mind Josh and the traces:" for Mike forgot that he had overshot the point of his story; and the lawyer led him out of the room, and squeezing his hand, said, "You're a good fellow and I'll take care of you."

After a short time Lady Bewdley recovered her presence of mind, and resumed (at all events, in appearance) the energy of her character, and said, "I feel now that my best plan will be to leave the matter in your hands, and desire you to make the best arrangement you can, so that I may hear no more of this sad and grievous waste of my property."

"My lady, there is one point which I really ought not to decide myself, and that is, the fee that should be paid to Mr. Bohun."

"Pay him what you please."

"The plaintiffs are poor, and I dare say he has had nothing; and you must forgive me for suggesting (which I do, because, on account of their poverty, it may remove a stumbling-block out of our way), that Mr. Bohun should have one hundred pounds, the same fee, I think, as Mr. Brougham, and I should like to have your authority to that extent, but not one shilling more."

“ Do anything you like for Mr. Bohun, and tell him I have been deceived and abused.

Lady Bewdley inquired of Mr. Holroyd “when Mr. Bohun left York?” and was informed “that he would certainly start the following morning for Durham, because he would have time for concluding his business in York that night; and that he would not start till after the arrival of the post at York next morning.

“ Then,” said the old lady, “ I will write to him and apologize,” and that she persisted in; though Mr. Holroyd said “he would put it all right with Mr. Bohun.” Her intention was not however fulfilled, for when she sat down to the desk she found herself so much overset, that she could not hold the pen, much less write with it, therefore she delegated the task to her niece, and wanted to dictate to her, but Lady Susan remonstrated, she said, “ my dear aunt, that cannot be, I could not get on well under dictation, and you would keep yourself in a state of mental excitement and exertion, of which you have had more than enough already, tell me in a general way what you wish to communicate, and I dare say I can convey it to Mr. Bohun in a way that will make him perfectly sensible of your feelings, and your wishes.”

“ I think that, perhaps, you are right, my dear; pray tell him, ‘ how shocked and how angry I am that I have been for this vast length of time ignorant of the most important service that he rendered to you and me, and

that I am most desirous of telling him so at Maidenthorpe, and will take it as a favour if he will inform me when I may hope for the great pleasure of seeing him in this place.' Tell him also that I don't regret the fate of my brother-in-law, for he has been the arch deceiver by whom I have been misled from a right knowledge of his, Mr. Bohun's, character and unparalleled services.' "

" That's quite enough, my dear aunt, nothing could be better, and I will write to him in so many words;" and so she did, but she began the letter " Dear Mr. Bohun," and signed it " Your's ever affectionately ;" and she added a postscript, " Notwithstanding my aunt's kindness to me, and admiration of you, she is still disposed to co-operate with my father in forcing me to marry the villanous marquess. If you want to write *to me* it must be through Mike."

This letter not only arrived at York that night, but Bohun received it, having directed Skinner to watch every arrival of the post; and he was very much delighted of course, and wrote a line to Mike accordingly, but on the half sheet for the lady he wrote " thanks, a thousand delighted thanks. The enemy cannot take the field yet, he is still in his room, living on spoon-meat."

The next day he wrote to Lady Bewdley, and gave a sketch of the assizes, and the time he would have to devote to each town, and said " that he hoped that at the latest he should arrive at Maidenthorpe, one or possibly



two days earlier than he did when he visited it two years before, and he trusted under much better auspices, for being now free from debt, having repaid to Mr. Hargrave the four thousand pounds he was indebted to him, he should travel at his ease, and take no risk in the journey." This he wrote because he wished, as soon as possible, to alter all the old lady's preconceived notions about him. He could not tell how soon it might be urgently necessary to marry Lady Susan, and he wished her aunt to know that he was an independent man, as well as a highly esteemed member of the Bar ; so that at the worst she might not be struck with horror at the idea of her niece making a ruinous and disgraceful match.

That undesirable proceeding was not however needful, for poor anxious Lady Susan had not occasion, owing to an alarming summons to herself, to precipitate Bohun's journey, so that he got through all his circuit business with credit and regularity, and arrived at Maidenthorpe on Thursday the 29th August, and his reception was everything he could wish, for Lady Susan was almost overpowered by her emotions. The old lady had not completed her toilet, which gave the lovers a few precious minutes. Bohun told Lady Susan "that it was needful to make some preparations for enabling them to marry at the required time, but that he would soon join her at Conquest Hall, for he had secured an invitation from Lord Bosworth;" but he did not think it would

be possible for them to be united before Tuesday week, saying “ It is a sad delay, but there are difficulties in the way of *lawful* matrimony which make it not an easy matter, unless we run off to Gretna, which is a plan I do not approve of.”

Lady Susan found her lover rather thin and worn with hard work: but after dinner, and a glass or two of the old lady’s port, he was animated, as well as graceful and genteel, and now that Lady Bewdley saw him in his own proper character, and was moreover made sensible by Mr. Holroyd of his very high position at the Bar, and that he was inevitably advancing to the most lucrative practice, and the highest rank in the profession, she saw him as it were with different eyes and invested him (not unjustly) with all the attributes of a gentleman, and was almost as much distressed as poor Lady Susan, that owing to the urgency of his present engagements, he had been obliged to order a chaise to take him to York that night, in order that he might proceed from thence to London by the mail; but he made the old lady a promise to revisit Maidenthorpe in less than three weeks.

Before they parted Lady Bewdley said, “ that she was going to send for Mr. Holroyd to alter her will, and would be happy if he would act as one of her executors.”

He consented to this of course, and promised to act, and said “ I will also volunteer an opinion, though it is contrary to etiquette, which is, if you propose to alter your will, to make it over again; and I think Mr. Hol-

royd will tell you the same, for it prevents a disappointed feeling in some instances, and really you save time and money and often obviate disputes and future litigation."

They parted soon after, the ladies being both in tears, and Lady Bewdley kissed him warmly, which ceremony, he regretted she had not delegated to her niece.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### CONQUEST HALL.

THE near approach of the grand fête at Conquest Hall, which was to come off on Thursday, the fourth of September, and the want of any intelligence of Bohun had rendered Lady Susan not only restless and anxious but very much depressed, and she was sitting in her boudoir languid and desponding, when her maid Lucy came to inform her “that Mrs. Clarke was below, and particularly begged to speak to her.”

“What does Mrs. Clarke want?” said her ladyship.

“I think its something about the christening of her children to-morrow, my lady.”

“But could not she send up word what was the subject?”

“Well, that’s what I wanted her to do, my lady, but she told me ‘to beg as a great favour that your ladyship would allow her to see you for a minute or two on something particular.’”

“Well, you must tell her to come up, though I am very nervous; my spirits are so low that it is painful to me to be disturbed. I dare say it’s only to tell me of her arrival from London.”

When the good woman came up stairs, looking far better and more cheerful than the charming lady, the latter could not help feeling the contrast, but said, "I suppose, Mrs. Clarke, you come to tell me that you are safe back from London in time for the ceremony which I have promised to assist at to-morrow."

"Yes, my lady, and the children's quite well, but there's something else I hope your ladyship will forgive me for mentioning, that there's a gentleman at our house as has took a great fancy to the children, and when he heard that they were to be christened to-morrow, and that your ladyship had promised to be godmama to 'em, he said, 'that, if your ladyship approved, he should like to stand godfather,' and so as I thought it might be as well to get more friends for the poor children anyhow as we could, I took the liberty to come and ask your ladyship's leave."

The lady of the hall looked surprised and grave, and said she "wondered that Mrs. Clarke could suppose that on such an occasion she should think of a stranger taking part with her in such a ceremony."

"I beg pardon, my lady, but the gentleman says he's well known to your ladyship;" and suddenly it struck Lady Susan that this intruder might be Bohun, and she demanded immediately "who the gentleman was?" and the lighting up of her whole countenance when the card of Bohun was presented, tranquillized the petitioner,

and made her very certain that her suit would not be denied.

“Why, my good woman, how happened this gentleman to get to your house.”

“Please you, my lady, we came down from London by the same coach, and he gave me his inside place and went outside himself.”

“Why he must have had a dreadful journey.”

“Certainly, my lady, but he had got a water-proof cap and put his hat inside, and he paid a crown for the use of an old box coat, and then he said, ‘he didn’t mind the weather,’ though to be sure it was enough to blow him off the box.”

“Well, but that does not inform me how he got to your house.”

“Why, my lady, my master had the cart to meet me at the end of our lane, and when the coach stopped, about six o’clock this morning, Mr. Bohun asked, ‘if this was not Conquest Hall?’ so he said, ‘he was going there,’ and naturally my husband asked him ‘if he’d come and take a little breakfast at our house;’ and so, to make a long story short, he got down and pulled off the box coat and got his hat, and pitched his portman-teau into the cart, though he wouldn’t get in himself, and so we came at once to the farm, and then, he said, ‘he wanted a few hours sleep more than anything,’ and we put him into the children’s bed, and there he slept as

sound as possible for about five hours, and after that he breakfasted very hearty with bacon and eggs, which he enjoyed very much, being then very hungry ; and just as he'd done the children came down from their morning nap, which they had in our bed, and after they had had their dinner he play'd with 'em and romp'd and sung and they took to him oh ! wonderful, and when he called little Susan his wife she hugg'd him round the neck and kiss'd him as if she had been a grown woman."

" I hope," said Lady Susan gravely, " you will teach her as she grows up not to be so ready to embrace men."

" Oh ! certainly, my lady ; but she won't often meet with the like of him I am sure ; bless me his voice was like a bell, a silver bell, even the old dog took to him like the rest of us. Well, then, it came up about the christening, and he caught at it directly and said ' he should like to stand godfather,' so made up his mind to send off the message as I have given to your ladyship, and he sent a letter to my lord, and I have given that to Mr. Slaney for him ; but, dear me, I hope he won't fail to deliver it, for Mr. Bohun wants very much to come to the Hall."

" Well, well, I'll take care about the letter, and manage all that ; and you may say ' that I agree with pleasure to the proposition of his being joined with me in the sponsorship.' I have seen Mr. Bohun abroad, as well as in England, and know him very well, though we

have not met for a long time ; and what did he sing to the children ?”

“ Oh ! my lady, it was mostly an old Scotch song that he sung over and over again, pretty much the same, about ‘ There’s nae luck about the house when my gude man’s awa’.’ ”

The lady smiled, and took up the burthen—

“ And are ye sure the news is true ?

“ And are ye sure he’s weel,” &c.

“ Yes, my lady, that’s just it ; but you never saw a man jump and dance about with the children in his arms in such a way in your life I am sure ; he is the pleasantest gentleman I ever saw, and such spirits : he hadn’t left off this game with the children when I came away.”

“ Indeed,” said Lady Susan, “ it’s a great thing to be so animated and cheerful after the exposure to that violent wind and rain throughout a night, on the top of a coach.”

“ Certainly, my lady, I don’t think as it’s a little as would daunt him.”

“ You may well say so, I think, for the storm kept me awake the greater part of the night ; though, to be sure, I thought more about the poor sailors than the travellers by land.”

“ Indeed, my lady, it was dreadful ; it would, most likely, have killed me if I had been outside.”

“ Then, Mrs. Clarke, the sooner you let Mr. Bohun



know the better. I shall try and get papa to ride over to the farm and see him if possible. ‘Pray tell him *I* should not think that too great a compliment.’” This was so said as to intimate that the more speedily the message were delivered the better.

When left alone, the lovely lady gave vent to the flood of joy which filled her heart, and her spirits and courage rose with the conviction that the man in whom she trusted, whom she had brought herself to regard as the angel of her destiny, had come to claim his own; and she resolved that no scruple of her’s should be an obstacle to their union. Neither was this a sudden or rash determination, and two strong motives urged it, her hatred of Lord Westcliff, no less than her love for Bohun; and though she lamented that the will of her two nearest relatives was opposed to her own, she felt that their opinions had an unsubstantial foundation, and resolved not to sacrifice her happiness to their dreams of grandeur. But it was necessary in this crisis to act with great address and caution, lest her papa should object to take the step she desired; but, finally, it being a beautiful sunshiny day after the rain, the riding party was undertaken according to her wish, and arrived at the farm about two hours subsequent to the interview with Mrs. Clarke.

By this time our hero had called to his aid a donkey, which formed part of the farm establishment, and he was riding his little friends upon this animal which, by means

of a good stick, he sometimes forced into a trot, while he held them on its back; and the group was attended by the house dog Bluff, partly on account of the interest he took in the scene, and partly, perhaps, to take care that the fascinating stranger did not make away with the children. The party from the Hall approached the house from the lane without seeing what was going on in the little orchard behind it; but Lord Bosworth having desired the intervening gates to be opened, came round upon Bohun without any previous notice of his arrival; when the latter saw the cortége enter the orchard, he would have left his party to approach the lord and lady; but this produced such a wail from the children, that he was obliged to put one on his shoulder, and take the other on his arm; and Mrs. Clarke, after much trouble in attempting to get them off him, was finally obliged to leave the little Susan clinging round his neck.

The invitation was very cordially given, and Bohun promised "to go over to the Hall very shortly," and Mrs. Clarke undertook "that his portmanteau should follow without delay." His departure from the children caused them many tears; but he promised to see them again to-morrow, and to bring each of them a pretty plaything.

When the hero and heroine of this tale met in the orchard, the freemasonry of love told the gladness of their hearts; at first Bohun seemed staggered and overwhelmed by the presence and enchanting smile of his

lady love ; but, afterwards, in holding up the little Susan to be kissed by her future godmama, he ventured to press the whip hand of the charming lady with the warmth of an old friend, and there was no frown, implying that if that hand had been at liberty it would have been raised for his chastisement.

The length of lane between the farm-house and the turnpike road was not more than a hundred yards, and the Hall and the farm were opposite one another on the elevated sides of a valley, along the bottom of which flowed a river, at present considerably swollen by the late rains and the drainage of a large tract of country, and therefore a noble object at some distance, though the water was turbid ; but, in general, it was far less beautiful than the clear trout streams, owing their origin to springs, and varying little in the flow of water throughout the year.

There was a good view of the valley from the farm, because the park wall, which was parallel with the turnpike road, had a long gap filled up by iron railings, nearly opposite the great mansion, in order to open up the country on the hill side opposite to it.

The northern park-lodge was about three quarters of a mile farther from London than the farm-lane, and the distance from the lodge to the Hall was nearly a mile. The straight distance over the valley from the farm to the Hall, as performed by one of his lordship's crows, would be rather less than a mile ; but as our hero pro-

ceeded thither on his own good legs, he walked along the turnpike road to the lodge, traversed a handsome bridge in the park, which was in a somewhat dilapidated state, and found the park, the architecture of the house, and the face of the circumjacent country very beautiful; and it made him sigh to think that the sweet heiress of this domain was in a very short time to take her last look of a place she was so exquisitely fitted to reign over.

Owing to his knowledge of the actual state of affairs Bohun was on the watch, in approaching the house, in expectation of distinguishing some myrmidon of Hatham and Squeeze in disguise, who should receive him with an air of authority, slightly disguised under a mask of lowliness, but there was no such encounter.

On arrival, he met with due respect from the well-drilled servants hired for the occasion, and finding that he was in advance of the lord and lady, who had prolonged their ride after the interview, he declined entering at once, but took a walk in the garden, and the neighbourhood of the house, and through the stable yard, where, to his great joy, he beheld his old friend Mike; but, instead of saluting him freely and kindly as the latter expected, he made a sign of secrecy, and strolled gently onwards and out through the gates of the stable yard, and then turning round, he caught the eye of Mike, who noticed a slight signal and followed his steps.

When Bohun was satisfied that Mike was on his track, he stepped on rather sharply out of the beaten road to a

clump of trees, and then suddenly turned and shook his old friend heartily by the hand. He then told Mike "that it gave him very great pleasure indeed to see him there, for friends, true friends, were never more wanted. You know of course, Mike, that things are very bad here."

"Yes, Mr. Bohun, I thought I made that out."

"And have you discovered who is master?"

"Well, I think it is a little man with dark whiskers, he seems to be a Jew, and he's constantly about, and three or four other chaps, and every one is afraid of them, for my lord gave orders that they were to be treated with every respect, but most of us guess what their business is, at least I think so."

"We are in a scene of utter wreck and ruin," said Bohun, "but you must appear to see and understand nothing, and make remarks and act and talk as if you were entirely careless about what was going on. It is not improbable that I should know some of the men who are keeping guard if I saw them. When men of rank have raised money by all other means they at last resort to the Jews, and I have reason to think that his lordship's effects are under pawn to a party who will look very sharp after them, though he is bound to postpone the sale for a short time; therefore, my friend, you and I must take care of the young lady, and what there is here belonging *to her*."

“ But is not her ladyship engaged to Lord Westcliff, Mr. Bohun ?” said Mike, with rather a sly expression.

“ Has *she* engaged *herself*, Mike ? Is she disposed to do so ? These are questions I mean to ask her to-morrow, and I will speak to you soon afterwards, and this is a good place for it ; but then, my good fellow, you must be as silent as the grave about this.”

“ That I will, and more than that, I’ll back you for any money if you enter for the race.”

“ Well, you shall know more of my intentions to-morrow afternoon, and in the meantime remember all I have said.”

“ Never fear me, sir,—the old lady’s a-going, and I should like you to be master at Maidenthorpe better than any other man in the world ; and so I’m sure would somebody else.”

“ Silence, my friend, we must part now.”

Bohun then directed his companion to take a different path, and he went to the Hall to meet the lord and lady who could be seen approaching it.

After they were assembled indoors his lordship said “ we dine at seven to-day, Mr. Bohun, what say you to passing away the time with a game at piquet ?”

“ It must be for small stakes then, my lord, for I have no practice, and I have heard that your lordship excels ; in fact, it has been intimated to me, that you are never beaten by fair means.”

“ Oh ! no, Mr. Bohun, come then we'll only play for guineas.”

“ Indeed, my lord, that stake will not suit me, I have but few guineas, and have to work hard for every one I get, but if you can condescend to play for crowns, I will venture to try my luck.”

However disgusting this very moderate proposal might be, his lordship could not object, and therefore Bohun sat down and lost five pounds ten shillings to the noble peer, notwithstanding he beat him whenever he chose.

The time to dress for dinner then arrived ; and after the ceremony of dining was over, at which two young ladies staying in the house, and the curate of Stowmarket, augmented the party, Bohun complained of excessive fatigue and drowsiness, owing to his journey outside the coach the night before, and retired to bed ; the fact was, he knew he should be pinned down to piquet, entirely debarred from converse with his lady-love, and compelled to sacrifice a larger sum than it suited him to lose ; and he really was so much in want of sleep, that he scarcely moved in his bed for ten hours, but not without previously taking care to secure his money under his pillow.

The morning was rather hazy, and, though he made a brief toilette, he was not in the breakfast-room till past nine o'clock. The noble peer was not famed for early rising, and Bohun breakfasted in company of the young ladies before mentioned and his exquisite hostess.

However love did not deprive him of his appetite, or divert him from his usual habit of making conversation as amusing as possible, and after a little talk upon the arrangements for the day, in which the christening was not mentioned, he walked out directly the breakfast things were removed.

Shortly before twelve o'clock Bohun was at the church, the children's presents had been most graciously accepted, and the coach adventure communicated to the clergyman by Mrs. Clarke, and Lady Susan herself soon arrived, when the ceremony was very decorously performed by the rector himself, Mr. Lodge, and after the conclusion Lady Susan said "well, Mrs. Clarke, besides the duty I have undertaken towards your dear children, I will make it my business to help them on in life whenever opportunities for doing so occur;"—"and I," said the godfather, "though I do not possess the means and influence of her ladyship, may have an opportunity of rendering them a service, and they shall not want my assistance whenever I can be helpful to them."

The christening party had not, of course, travelled together. Farmer Clarke drove his wife and children in the cart, Bohun walked, and Lady Susan came on horseback, attended by Mike.

When the ceremony was over this order was changed, by an arrangement made with Mrs. Clarke and Mike beforehand; Bohun and the lady rode off a-head pretty fast up to the farm-house, where a hind was in waiting to



take care of their nags, and the cart was detained by walking up the hill and various contrivances of Mrs. Clarke or Mike, so that the hero and heroine had twenty minutes for business discussion. Almost immediately after they found themselves alone in the little parlour Lady Susan was clasped in the arms of Bohun, who embraced and kissed her with a fervour she had not before conceived an idea of. At length she was able to say, "Alfred, I have trusted my honour to you, is this . . . ."

He stopped her by saying, on his knees, "Pardon, pardon, heavenly creature! the ambrosia intoxicated me. Continually in sleep and awake has that blessed image for years filled my imagination, and the sense of the reality being before me excited transports it was impossible to restrain."

"Pooh! you are a silly man. What was this *business* you had to speak about?"

He placed her on a chair and sat down in front of her, smiling inwardly at the reflection that he had taken judgment on the most important point of the case.

"To-morrow, dearest lady, my dreaded rival, Lord Westcliff, arrives at the Hall."

"For shame, Alfred, to think of dreading him, is not my sitting here, after your rude behaviour, a proof that he is not preferred by me? 'Be that thou art, and then thou art as great as that thou fearest.'"

“Bravo, I have persuaded you to read Shakespeare that you might quote him to confound me ; but, dear lady, we have to contend with stern realities, not poetical heroics. Your father is lord of every thing over there (pointing to the other side of the valley), the law says a man’s house is his castle, and if he ordered my departure out of the way of this hateful lord, I could not for an instant dream of opposing his will, but I want to remain till after the party, and I want to forewarn you of what may happen, and I fear is intended to happen, and that is, immediately after supper and *in your presence* to propose the health of yourself and the marquess in conjunction. I was anxious to prepare you for this and advise you to take an early opportunity of feigning illness at the supper table and rushing away.”

“Gracious heavens ! This is a frightful beginning of business.”

“Yes, and the next point I have to submit may possibly be more frightful, but I hope not.”

“What other horror have you in store for me ?”

“I only want you, dear lovely lady, to consent to marry me and fix the day.”

“A very precipitate demand, my Alfred, but, considering your title to my confidence, not so very alarming, but if I could make up my mind to such a desperate step, what mode of accomplishing it can you point out ?”

“First, my angel, every lady must fix the day of her own marriage, but if you can be induced to complete my

happiness on Tuesday next it will be wonderfully delightful and convenient and apropos to the last publication of the banns."

"The banns, Alfred, what amazing rashness."

"My experience, dear lady, told me it was the only safe way, and your name and mine were read over among a hundred others on Sunday last, in my presence, without causing any observation, and on next Sunday, I trust that Skinner will hear the last publication."

"Well," said Lady Susan, "if other things necessarily appertaining can be satisfactorily arranged, I suppose I must conform."

"Then," said he, seizing her hand and pressing it to his lips, "on Tuesday I may have the bliss of calling this mine."

"But, really, Alfred, I am in a state of amazement."

"Trust, my charmer, to Mrs. Foster and to me for all things needful being arranged."

"I see not how this can be done, though I know that you and Mrs. Foster are clever people."

"And I hope you will allow us to be good too?"

"Oh, yes! I trust you both."

"Then now, dearest love," he said, "prepare yourself to avoid me. Our intercourse must be extremely limited; I must quit the Hall on Friday morning, but I shall lie hidden in the neighbourhood till Sunday afternoon or Monday morning, but what I hope you will consider finally determined upon is, that you order Mike

out with the light carriage on Monday afternoon about two o'clock, and set out with him well wrapped up, and having your watch and all your aunt's jewels carefully concealed about your person, but leaving every other part of your wardrobe. I will instruct Mike as to the place of our meeting on the road, and you shall not want supplies of all sorts in London, and I may probably get your clothes from the Hall within a very short time. Ah ! my dearest," he added, "I hear the wheels of the cart, our adieu must be now, but, oh ! forgive me for once more taking advantage of your love and confidence," and so saying he clasped her hand and seized the brief opportunity of once more pressing her lips to his.

When Mike arrived Lady Susan ordered him "to bring out the horses immediately," and set off for the hall, after drinking health and prosperity to the little godchildren in a glass of currant wine.

Neither did Bohun prolong his stay much after her departure, for some of the friends of the family joined the festivity, and he did not want to improve his farming acquaintance to any great extent, though the hostess had made a very favourable impression upon him ; and, moreover, he thought that possibly she might be made use of for the purpose of communication with Lady Susan.

He walked slowly in the line of his first approach to the Hall and loitered about the river and the park some

time before he made his way to the neighbourhood of the clump where he had met Mike the day before ; and the latter, after he had attended the horses, and got his dinner, instinctively walked towards the same spot, and, on approaching Bohun, said "well, your honour, I hope the dark horse is to win?"

His companion smiled, but said "my good friend I am full of hope, but there's a great deal to do yet, and I cannot take the lady away before Monday."

"That's a pity," said Mike, "I don't like a waiting race, better to make play and win at once when you can do it."

"My good friend the delay is unavoidable, but at the same time I admit that it is dangerous ; and the more so, because I know that on the arrival of Lord Westcliff I shall be compelled to move off ; there's an old grudge between us, and a word from him to Lord Bosworth will be sufficient to make him dismiss me rudely from the house."

"I wish you'd shot him at York," said Mike, "for he's a bad lot, and has took to gaming desperately lately, as they tell me."

"Don't let us talk about shooting, Mike," said Bohun, "I did not meet you here to say more about him, than that we must watch him and his party and pick up what we can, using always the utmost caution in our observations and inquiries, and being silent as possible, and, to all appearance, knowing nothing, and caring nothing

about what's passing or what's settled ; I shall try to stay to the ball, but after that I must be out of the way ; but I mean to be near at hand, and I shall be about of nights, and that's particularly the time I want you to be on the look out, and to let me know about everything you see and hear. What's your opinion of Lucy ?”

“ Not over and above, Mr. Bohun ; she's not a bad girl, but she's liable to be very much taken with a smart, good-looking young fellow, so I think it would be better for my lady to keep herself to herself.”

“ Quite right, Mike ; she has no friends, poor thing, and has a hard game to play.”

“ Well, Mr. Bohun, never fear ; you and I, when we know the work that's cut out for us, are two pretty good ones, and I think we'll make it come right somehow or other.”

This encouragement cheered our hero for the moment, and they shook hands and parted.

Bohun determined to have no piquet that day, so he went to the ladies and begged that they would give him some lessons in dancing ; and Lady Susan played, and he contrived to be a very bungling learner, and amused the young ladies very much by all manner of awkward attempts and mistakes, so as generally at the end of a measure to be in the wrong place, with his face turned the wrong way, and his legs in full activity ; and the confusion he acted, the gauntness of his movements, and his earnestness to be made a dancer in spite of every

obstacle that nature had apparently interposed, diverted all the young ladies, and even made Lord Bosworth laugh heartily, who came in in the middle of the lesson.

“Upon my word, Mr. Bohun,” said his lordship, “I think the patience of the ladies must be almost exhausted, for I must say I never beheld a more unpromising pupil.”

“It’s a more perplexing case than I expected, certainly, my lord. I have often seen the kind of performance, and I thought it appeared very easy.”

“I am afraid,” said Lord Bosworth, “we must not engage you to lead off the dance.”

“I cannot expect, my lord, to come out at once as a leader; but, perhaps, if these young ladies will condescend to give me another lesson to-night, I may be able to perform an humble part, for I actually learned to waltz at Vienna.”

“By-the-bye,” said Lord Bosworth to his daughter, “Pierrepont said ‘that he waltzed and sung with prodigious *éclat* at Vienna;’ pray, Mr. Bohun, oblige us with an air.”

“Pierrepont is a traitor; he promised not to betray my follies at Vienna: but if your lordship likes music, I will try what I can do; but it must be on the condition that I am not to be called forth to any public exhibition, for that I will certainly decline. I cannot ask whether there is anything that you particularly fancy in the musical way, because I chiefly sing little national

melodies, such as these young ladies will despise; they are a sort of wayside ballads, not recommended by novelty or fashion."

"Well, never mind, we shall be glad to hear them I dare say. Pray indulge us," said Lady Susan; and the ladies all professed their love for ballads, "the most charming of all music," &c., &c.

Accordingly, Bohun sat down to the instrument and sang Moore's "Meeting of the Waters" in the most perfect style possible, for his voice was in good condition, and the little excitement he was in made him give peculiar expression to the air. The peer was really fond of music, and a judge, and no one was louder in the praises of our hero than he. Lady Susan could not trust herself to speak; but the minstrel was chained to his seat, the ladies forgot his bad dancing, and Lord Bosworth thought not of piquet. Bohun perceived the effect on Lady Susan, and therefore changed to some clever little French songs, and after that Mozart's "Forget me not," giving the translated words.

Lord Bosworth then said, "you have relied chiefly on foreign compositions, is there nothing English that you can think of?"

"Oh! certainly, my lord, do you agree with me in admiring 'Black-eyed Susan?'"

"Oh!" cried the young ladies, "pray let us have that."

"With all my heart," said my lord, "and pray remind me of Incledon if you can."



“Then I beg you to remove to a little distance, for I always thought Incledon’s a sort of out-door music;” but he sang this and other ballads with surprising effect.

Bohun’s great anxiety, and what had made him fall in with the singing scheme, was to escape piquet; so after the burst of applause which followed his last performance he led on to some duets with Lady Susan, and such was Lord Bosworth’s fondness for music, that it absorbed him for two or three hours, and he was quite amazed at Bohun’s voice and proficiency and musical memory, so that he thought no more of the abortive attempts at dancing which he had regarded with so much derision, and which Bohun contrived to renew after dinner; but he dexterously made slow approaches, which raised expectations in his fair preceptresses, and, finally, he fulfilled all their hopes by waltzing in the true German style, so what with singing, and dancing and joking, he finally accomplished his object, namely, to get to bed without losing any more money—for of this he had great dread—because, though he had a pretty good sum, he was not confident of his funds exceeding what was needful for travelling above one hundred miles with four horses in racing style. Neither did the day pass without sweet opportunities of renewed vows, protestations, and encouraging assurances on his part, and sighs mingled with heart penetrating smiles from the goddess of his affections.

It may seem strange that Bohun was the only gentle-

man visitor; but, in fact, he was unexpected, for the Hall—the faded, deserted, dilapidated Hall—was during this time in a state of preparation. Furniture, trappings of various sorts, decorations, all the provision for a dinner and a ball, gradually and, as it were, by magic assembled there. The family plate also appeared, or rather the use of it was permitted by the banker with whom it was deposited, and who held a lien upon it, and sent a guard to take care of it. Various skilful people, whose aid and means responded to the pecuniary supplies of Lady Bewdley, were busy about the house, and every department within and without was made to assume for the nonce an aspect of vitality, so that on the day of reception it shone like a poor actor dizenied out to strut his hour of display and grandeur. Nothing of this escaped Bohun, and he heartily lent his aid to promote every little change that the ladies wished to have effected in the arrangements proposed, or in the decorations, or position of the lights.

It was his lordship's wish that the domestic party should assemble at the dinner table in full dress, but Lady Susan and Bohun, acting independently, ventured to contest this decree. The latter determined to show in a quiet dinner dress, that is, to make a very moderate appearance, and the former was prompted by her good taste to refrain from extreme display, when display would be out of season.

At the æra of this history there was a custom of intro-

ducing people, not previously acquainted, who met to dine together, a custom which is unaristocratic in itself and also a bore. Persons of condition must occasionally have certain people at their tables, that is to say, at election times, or, when their circumstances are not in that precise order that they could at once lay their hands on the parchments respectively relating to the different parts of their estates, like as jars and bottles can instantly be taken down from the shelves in a chemist's shop. This fact is understood, and acquiesced in as a common necessity by the illustrious givers of half a dozen state dinners in the season: but the thing has been smoothed down by avoiding these troublesome introductions. The dinner is a feed,—the dishes are *recherchés* and handed round—the guests are in a certain degree heterogeneous, the conversation is not at all general, the wines are also handed round—the season of drinking is brief—and the aristocrat departs with the satisfactory consciousness that he can never be thought to know the man who sat next him at table. This is a stretch in civilization, acquired by the observation of foreign manners and the judicious contrivances of our Continental neighbours for preserving with tenacity the distinction of ranks, a refined system which prevails at most of the courts on the Continent, as it did in the superior circles in France *before the Revolution*.

Bohun was in the drawing-room, as it was called in those days pretty early, and Lord Bosworth introduced

him to his brother, Admiral Altham, and as the latter was a very sociable character, and affected great freedom of manner, he and Bohun soon became cordial friends, and enjoyed a conversation, by no means devoid of fun, in one of the remote windows.

The invited guests gradually arrived, and particularly young ladies, who chose to make their toilette at the Hall, after dinner, and finally (later than Lord Bosworth wished) the Marquess of Westcliff was introduced with his friend (a sort of aide-de-camp) Captain Terence Smith, of the sister kingdom. His lordship was most carefully equipped, every appendage of chain and ornament adapted to the style of his dress was tastefully displayed by his valet, and he went through the circle with grace, dignity, and in some cases condescension. There had been considerable pauses in the course of his lordship's introduction to gentlemen and ladies of the neighbourhood, because the marquess thought proper to be more polite and complimentary to them than usual, being at the time in great good humour with himself, and elated by the prominent position he filled.

The admiral and Bohun had remained in the window for some time, thinking that a very small share of these most courteous salutations and greetings would best suit their humour, and did not fill up their places in the circle till near the finale, and Bohun took care that the admiral should precede him, but when he also came to the front, the face of the marquess became aghast, as that

of Macbeth on beholding the ghost of Banquo, and though the amazed spectators understood nothing of the scene, good reason was there for his lordship to shudder at finding on that spot the man who seemed born for his defeat and humiliation. Bohun himself was polite, and unmoved, but the marquess, who in a moment recovered his presence of mind, turned away with an expression of extreme disgust. Lord Bosworth and the admiral both noticed this, but the former said privately to the marquess "he goes early to-morrow morning," and dinner being announced the party lost no more time.

Of course the Lady Susan, whose morning spirits were all evaporated, was led off by the marquess and seated between him and her father, the captain offered his arm to a lady and took care of himself, and the admiral placed himself at the bottom of the table, and secured Bohun as his neighbour, and the other guests took their places without any particular arrangement. During dinner nothing could elevate the spirits and merriment at the upper end of the table to a par with the hilarity of the squadron under the care of the admiral, whose second in command exerted himself to the utmost for the general entertainment; nevertheless, there was no particular incident or remark during the presence of the ladies, whom Lady Susan led away as soon as she could after the dinner was over. During dinner the noble marquess had endeavoured to soothe his excited indignation by the cooling influence of iced champagne, but the

medicine, of which he took an ample dose, seemed rather to sustain and elevate the sentiment of offended dignity, and brought him to think that as soon as he determined to assume his rightful character of Jupiter Tonans, surrounded as he was by deities of inferior rank disposed to fulfil his behests, he might as it were by a nod expel at once the odious intruder, whom he had already shown to be hateful to his sight; therefore, when the party were resuming their seats after the retirement of the ladies, the marquess turned towards his host and said, "My lord, I think I have a right to complain of your inviting me here to be introduced into the company of lawyers: they are people that I very much dislike and despise, and therefore I always avoid them, because I consider them not fit company for people of rank."

This brutal effusion threw the party into a state of amazement, excepting only our hero, to whom it was no surprise, he therefore quietly rose at the conclusion of the harangue, and addressing Lord Bosworth calmly, said, "My lord, as I am the only lawyer present, I assume to be the object of this anathema, and claim to prove that members of the Bar have an ancient and indisputable title to the character of gentlemen and to bear arms;" and then addressing himself to the marquess, he said, "I beg to tell you, sir, that if I am driven from this society in consequence of this calumny and insult, I will obtain satisfaction for it in a personal encounter, or I will brand the author as a bully and a coward!" He then

sat down by the side of the admiral, and whispered in his ear—"Water versus Champagne."

This rather paralyzed the party, and the marquess in particular, because he had expected prompt and vociferous support from his military companion, but on all sides there was an ominous silence, till Lord Bosworth, who felt the imperative necessity of interfering, rose and said that "he lamented this dissonance of feeling between two gentlemen for whom he felt great esteem, founded, as he must suppose, on some previous difference, which he implored them to put aside, in order that the cordial good feeling which on this happy occasion he had hoped to see universal might be re-established, and therefore he prayed that his brother would aid him in calming down these fiery spirits, so that this ebullition might be attended with no fatal consequences, and in fact a reconciliation effected, that might efface all traces of it. He also requested Captain Smith to take the marquess aside and talk the matter over with him, saying, that he would only use *his* influence in case of the captain or the admiral requiring it."

The dispute was soon settled, the captain at once told the marquess he had gone the wrong way to work, and promised to murder Bohun out of his way, if he would be quiet for this night; and the admiral soon understood from his client that the slightest apology would satisfy his honour.

The marquess was therefore obliged to say, that

“he had acted under a false impression of the character of Mr. Bohun, and desired to retract anything he had said that reflected on that gentleman;” and so this absurd dispute was ended by some compliment on the part of Bohun to his lordship’s candour, and the kind and judicious interference of Lord Bosworth.

The bottle did not circulate long after this, and coffee having been handed, the party withdrew to different rooms to prepare for the opening of the ball, which, as it was a country party, was fixed for half-past nine o’clock.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE BALL.

THE Lady Susan made a point of being in the room a short time in advance, to see if any fresh arrangement occurred to her, and there she met the admiral, who, in spite of sundry pledges of secrecy, could not help telling the lady the story of the insult and the challenge, and enlarged upon the spirit and coolness of Bohun, and among other things remarked, that “he would sooner take his chance in face of the broadside of a seventy-four, than stand within twelve paces of that young fellow’s pistol when the word ‘fire’ was given.”

This story was not at all to the taste of the lady, who seeing Bohun at that time enter the room, beckoned him to them, and addressing him said, “I thought I might have relied on your prudence, Mr. Bohun, to avoid duels, which I abhor, and I hear of your provoking one with the Marquess of Westcliff.”

“I think that the relation of what happened has not conveyed a correct idea of the motives of my conduct to your ladyship. I assure you that my object, and in which I succeeded, was to prevent a duel taking place. It was impossible to let the remarks of the marquess pass

without calling him out, but my prompt announcement of that caused, as I foresaw must be the case, the interposition of Lord Bosworth, and the prevention of the duel."

"What!" said the admiral, "did you not mean to fight?"

"Assuredly not," said Bohun.

"Then, sir, you are a humbug and a poltroon!"

"And I honour you for it," said Lady Susan; and then addressing the admiral she said, "My dear uncle, the brave should be friends with the brave, I owe my life to Mr. Bohun's gallantry in a desperate combat, and an experienced officer like you ought to perceive at once what an egregious impropriety it would have been, to give it its mildest term, for Mr. Bohun to shoot the marquess at such a season as this."

"I believe you are right," said the admiral, "so there's my hand, Mr. Bohun."

"And I hope," said Lady Susan, "that this is not a hollow truce, but that you mean to have no fighting."

"It is my earnest wish, my lady," said Bohun; and then turning to the admiral he said, before the lady was out of hearing, "is not she a first-rate?"

They were then interrupted, and Bohun went to the tea-room, not only to indulge himself with a cup, but to make what observations he could of the arrivals. Among these he noticed the clergyman who had officiated at the christening of Mrs. Clarke's children, and he imme-

diately claimed acquaintance with him, and got introduced to a nice little girl, his daughter, who was invited through the kindness of Lady Susan to make her *début* as a dancer; and Bohun asked her to be his partner in the third quadrille, explaining that he had engaged himself for the first two to two young ladies in the house who had taught him to dance. This engagement afforded much gratification to herself and her papa, who had previously formed a very high opinion of the good nature of our hero, from the story of Mrs. Clarke's journey.

While they were together, the Lady Trefoil entered the room and very good humouredly joined in the conversation. This lady had been at the dinner, but not at that time in her full blaze, so that, in fact, our hero engaged more of her attention than she had excited of his, for he took pains to devote his powers to the general amusement, without the slightest appearance of preference for any in particular of the fair ones by whom he was surrounded. The handsome lady had been piqued at not being singled out as the particular object of his attentions at the dinner table, but, on reflection, she took it for granted that, being a lawyer, he would not be attracted by eyes or hair, dimples, complexion or beauty of shape, unless the captivating influence of these were enhanced by the substantial advantage of a fortune or a jointure, and in that view of the potency of her attractions she was conscious of an important superiority; and

everything in her toilette being now perfected to a charm, her ladyship's maid and her looking-glass gave her indisputable assurance that in beauty she was without a rival, so that, by her own calculation, to behold her was to be conquered. Neither were Lady Trefoil's pretensions at all unreasonable; she was not more than four-and twenty, graceful, and accomplished, and, in the eyes of those whose taste inclined to something more substantial than the sylph, remarkably attractive. She had been married when very young to a drunken husband, who after all could not be reclaimed, which it was the particular object of his family to effect by this match with a well-disposed handsome young woman; but he killed himself in spite of all their care, and the widow had become independent about two years before the time of the ball. In this interval it may reasonably be supposed that she had not been without offers; but she fully appreciated her own value, and was really in more than anything else desirous of pleasing herself in the individual to whom she was to resign her independence, rather than to exchange it for greater wealth by a second matrimonial connexion, or perhaps rank, by accepting a man with an encumbered estate; and it may be observed, by the way, that Lord Bosworth himself had not regarded Lady Trefoil with perfect indifference.

Perhaps it was casual, but it did so happen, that his lordship was in the tea-room at the entrance of Lady Trefoil, but our hero happening to be in a more con-

spicuous place was first exposed to the blaze of her charms, and when *she* beheld *him* set off by the best style of dress, full of vivacity and kindly and gallantly offering trifling services to the ladies in the tea-room, she was momentarily confirmed in her first impression, and decided that he was to be the happy man, and thought she could in the course of the evening find means to signify her preference, in the trust that their mutual happiness might result. However, that was not to happen at the present moment, for Bohun's intended partner in the first quadrille being prepared to leave the room, they walked off together, but not till after Bohun had received a kind nod of recognition from the beautiful widow. The coast was then clear for the lord of the hall, and he addressed the fair one very tenderly, saying, "that though he was past the best of his dancing performances, he hoped she would honour him with her hand in the first quadrille."

Lord Westcliff next arrived in this ante-room, and testified enthusiastically his admiration of the lady, whom he had before met, but whose beauty had never till that occasion made so vivid an impression on him, and he immediately engaged her hand for the second quadrille, knowing that he must of course open the ball with the Lady Susan.

The young lady to whom Bohun was engaged preferred taking part in the second set, whereat he was

much pleased, for on every account he wished to keep as much in the background as possible.

Lady Susan perceived this, and could not venture to question Bohun's judgment, though their separation grieved her. However, there were plenty of claimants for each set, and Bohun and his partners had much fun about his speedy attainment of the art, &c., for the joke was now quite transparent.

During the dance he found opportunity to gain much information about the guests, which he turned to account by never seeking to be introduced to ladies of any rank, or who from being celebrated as beauties might disdain to dance with a stranger, who had no footing in the county. The third quadrille to which he stood up was with Miss Lodge, and he was very much amused with her exact performance of the figures, and even the steps, and in the pause afterwards while walking about the room, she completed his information as to the individuals of the party, and enabled him afterwards, by dancing almost every dance, to give many young ladies the opportunity of exhibiting charming persons and accomplished dancing, whose fate it might otherwise have been sadly to decorate the wall.

Lord Bosworth, who appreciated this characteristic of a gentleman, felt grateful for it, and certainly, though Bohun's eyes were rather too frequently in one direction, his apparent avoidance of Lady Susan, and the other

ladies of the first set, created a notion that he did not fly at the highest game.

There was a waltz called shortly, and one of the young ladies who had taken pains to instruct him was selected by Bohun as his partner, and they shone with such grace, such spirit, such entire abandonment to the gliding character of the music, that it seemed as if they were wafted about by it. This brilliant performance drew many eyes upon them, and among the rest the admiral, who enjoyed it more than anything he had seen that night. In the course of it they made a pause near the old gentleman. "Well done, young ones," he said, "you steered uncommonly well among all the craft. I thought you must have been foul of some of them."

"Oh! no danger of that," said Bohun, "we keep a good look out, and if I had had any fear of our eyes, I would have borrowed your spectacles." So saying away they went.

The dance terminated soon after this, and the widow, who had not ventured into the waltz at this early period of the evening, noticed from a distance this little passage between the admiral and Bohun; and going up to the former soon after, said, "You know that young lawyer, admiral, it seems?"

"Oh! yes; I never saw him till to-day, but it's easy enough to know such an impudent dog as that."

"He does not show impudence in every thing," said

the lady, "for though we met at dinner he has never asked me to dance, and he is, you see, a good dancer, and I should like to have him for a partner in the next dance."

"I'll go and wring his ear off."

"No, no, my kind friend, that would betray me; do the thing by skill and not by violence of any kind, contrive that it be your doing, and I will keep myself disengaged for him."

The admiral shortly seized Bohun and insisted on his immediately dancing with the fair widow; there was no refusing, so he went. "Mind," said the admiral, "she's an argosie, a carrack, smooth water for life, my boy, such a shape, too, never saw finer lines in my life, quite a model; if you don't carry her I shall say you deserve nothing better than to command a bumboat."

Bohun accordingly begged the honour, etc., and when the next quadrille was made, stood up with Lady Trefoil in the first set. He was very polite and attentive, but the spirits which had animated him before were subdued, and he was nearly as formal and dull as the generality of fashionable young men are under like circumstances. When the quadrille was finished, the lady chose to take an ice, though she did not wish anything of a freezing character to act on her companion, but when they went into the room where refreshments were provided he saw Mrs. Clarke employed among others in giving them out.



After the ice was supplied Bohun said, "I dare say now, Mrs. Clarke, you are thinking of your sweet children, and how my charming little Susan will be one day admired for her grace and gaiety in scenes like this ; I warrant that her hand will be contended for by all the young fellows of her day."

"No, indeed, Mr. Bohun, I have not been thinking of anything of the kind, but have been blaming myself for leaving the poor children to the care of my young girl ; for Clarke is here too, along with the people down stairs."

"Pooh, pooh ! my good woman, you forget honest ' bluff,' he alone would protect my dear little godchildren from a regiment of soldiers."

"Well, well, Mr. Bohun, I shan't be sorry when the time comes for me to return to them."

His promenade with Lady Trefoil being terminated by the claim of another partner, he determined to avoid dancing next time, and for this he had also another reason which he did not communicate to anybody. In the course of the evening his attention had been called to the gallant and gay Irish officer, Captain Terence Smith, for it had struck him once or twice that the Irish hero rather shunned his observation, and moreover something in the expression of the man's countenance (which was by no means pleasing) seemed to recal a faint but disagreeable reminiscence ; so much so, that he

had pondered upon it, and thought over the various faces which had come under his observation in legal practice, but as yet without success, and he now determined to make a study of him, but he was not among the dancers ; and, after looking about a little, he found that Lord Bosworth had withdrawn him from the party, for the purpose of indulging in a game of piquet. The apartment into which they retired for this purpose had its entrance from the ball room, and a screen was so placed that they might not be actually in view of the dancers. Bohun entered quietly and seated himself behind the screen, in which situation he had, by means of a looking-glass, and the room being well lighted up, a distinct view of the face of the captain, not the full face, but about a three-quarters' view. The latter was absorbed in the game, and in watching his antagonist, and the calm shrewd observer had the opportunity of examining the face he wanted to study, and also the card practice of the captain, and it did not require long time to discover the superior skill and the fraudulent practice of the antagonist of Lord Bosworth ; but still he was unsuccessful in identifying the likeness, and perhaps the brogue assisted in baffling him. After a time, however, a subject was started which made Bohun even more keenly attentive than he was while watching the game, for the following dialogue took place between the players :—

“Pray, my lord, have you been long acquainted with this fiery gentleman, Mr. Bohun?”

“I have only been in his company two or three times in my life; but I am under great obligations to him, for he saved the life of my daughter and my sister Lady Bewdley, and he is a clever entertaining person; he has been here two days, and has made me laugh very much, more than I have lately been accustomed to do.”

“But, I presume, you are aware of his being a very disreputable character, that he narrowly escaped hanging, and that he owed his life to the tears and prayers of his mother, which excited the compassion of the judge.”

“Oh! no; I know the judge, and he told me himself that it was a case of conspiracy, and that if he could have caught the man who gave evidence against Bohun, and who had in confederacy with him a woman of bad character, he would have hanged the villain who was accuser, for it was one of the most infamous attempts he had ever met with.”

“Did you hear the name of the party, my lord?”

“Yes; but it has escaped my recollection.”

At this moment Bohun determined on a surprise, and coughed; upon which the villain turned as if a shot from an ambush had been fired at him. Bohun, who was prepared for this, had his pocket handkerchief to his face, as if he were warm, and wiping it, so that, though he himself took care to be able to watch the effect on the

captain, the other was prevented from distinguishing him, and that expression of countenance which Bohun wanted to detect being revealed, he was off in the next moment, and the villain could not be certain that he was detected, though he was subjected to an alarm that made him shudder.

The supper was announced soon after this, and Bohun took care to escort one of the young ladies who had been staying in the house, and who had been his preceptress, and waited upon her very assiduously, and was also very much on the alert in attending to other ladies who came down by themselves.

The Lady Trefoil was accompanied by a young clergyman, who was of course devoted to his beautiful partner, and she received his attentions very complacently, not because he was in reality acceptable to her, but in order to sharpen the attention of Bohun.

As for the captain, though he was well pleased with the replenishment of his pocket, he had been terror stricken by the interruption of the game, and his nerves were quite unstrung. He watched Bohun in the supper room, but the levity of his behaviour, his indifference or rather his apparently exuberant care of all the ladies, whether he had danced with them or not, his gaiety, his jokes, and his avoidance of the upper table, threw the captain off his guard, and he sat down to supper with his appetite somewhat restored by the re-assurance of his incognito.

Suddenly there was a bustle at the upper table—Lady Susan was ill! Lady Trefoil and other ladies took her in charge, and, with the aid of the young clergyman and the admiral, she was removed, and many ladies accompanied her out of the room.

Bohun sat down at the lowest table, and ate a sandwich, which he washed down with a glass of sherry; and then, most of the ladies having retired, he slipped away.

The captain, with many of the principal guests, advanced to the upper table, and *they* seemed disposed not to throw away the opportunity of enjoying themselves.

When Bohun returned to the ball room, he found it empty, but that arose from the withdrawal of Lady Susan, and the ladies who accompanied her, to the music room, whither he also went, and was happy to see Lady Susan sitting near a window watched by the admiral, and looking pretty well again, and she evidently brightened up as he entered.

Lady Trefoil and the clergyman were just going to begin a duet, and Bohun's arrival wakened up all the sensibility of the lady, and she sang her very best, and the performers were very highly and sincerely applauded, though not by our hero. The piece was from an Italian opera, and was sung by two artists, not of the highest grade, who attempted to produce the full operatic effect, and the noise and furor of the scene, and their great exertions, in a room of moderate dimensions, without

any of the scenic associations, failed of pleasing his refined taste. However, he felt the necessity of going with the stream, and took part in the chorus of applause, and when that was allayed, a call was made on Lady Susan, which she tried to evade with the hackneyed excuses of being out of practice—nerves—nothing to sing—at last in turning over the leaves of a music book, she dropped upon a theatrical ditty of Braham's composition, commencing with the highly poetical line, "Behold a poor desolate maid," &c., &c., and which "she thought she might be able to sing, but it really was nothing without a violoncello accompaniment," and then addressing the musical clergyman, she asked "if he could supply that for her;" but as that gentleman declared his inability, the admiral hastened away without saying a word, and returned in two minutes with the member of the band who played the violoncello for the dancers, and exulted in producing him to the lady as one who would be able to play the part; and he was quite astonished when the poor drudge disclaimed the undertaking in the strongest terms. "He had never accompanied a lady"---"did not know the music," &c.

Bohun was a silent but not negligent spectator of this, and at last he caught a glance from the lady which he could not resist, and therefore appealing to the admiral he said, "I am sorry to see this gentleman unwilling to undertake the accompaniment, I have no doubt he would do it much better than I can, but as he seems to make a

difficulty, I beg to offer myself as a poor substitute, if Lady Susan will condescend to venture with a stranger."

Of course, the lady was "most happy to make the attempt."

He said "he must try the instrument first;" and after having tuned it he played a beautiful voluntary made up from Corelli's music, and gradually modulated into the proper key for the song. Having given this proof of his power, he asked Lady Susan "if she would entrust the accompaniment exclusively to him," a proposition which she gladly acquiesced in, and the performance was very perfect, and gave great and genuine satisfaction.

The Lady Trefoil had watched this with the most profound interest; she was not without a sense of pleasure from the music; on the contrary, she seemed very highly gratified, and tried for an encore, but that was declined by Lady Susan, who saw that the dancers were arriving. But the performance of Bohun gave a new zest to the fair widow's love; a professor of any art whose excellence surpasses ordinary skill, becomes an object of exciting attention; nothing of the taste, the delicacy, or the power of our hero escaped her, and she appreciated his perfect and vigilant support of the vocal performer, and sighed to think how he might enhance the effect of her own singing. She made her way up to Lady Susan, and begged her in private to arrange if

possible that Bohun should dance with her again. Lady Susan did not much like this request, but feeling that she ought to be as obliging as possible to the guests, she took the opportunity of again thanking Bohun for his very useful accompaniment, and then asked him "how he had got on for partners in the ball."

"Very satisfactorily, my lady. I have not aspired to the most exalted in rank and the peerless in beauty," bowing at the same time to the lady, "and, therefore, have had very fair success."

"Upon my word, I think," said Lady Susan, addressing the other lady, "that such modesty deserves reward; therefore I shall request you, as the peerless in beauty, to grant your hand to Mr. Bohun for the next quadrille; and I, on the score of rank, will claim him for a partner in the succeeding dance."

The gentleman made a most profound bow, and said, "that he felt honoured much beyond his deserts," and, accepting the arm of Lady Trefoil, led her into the ball-room.

Very soon after their entrance, they were met by Lord Westcliff and the gallant captain just arrived from the supper-table, both of whom were, after their fashion, desperately in love with Lady Trefoil—the first being enamoured of her person, which seemed *to him* the very perfection of female beauty; the second, without being indifferent to her charms, was infinitely more intent upon her independent fortune, in exchange for which he would



gladly have renounced all his military prospects ;—both of them were moved with the fiercest indignation at finding the lady engaged, particularly the lord, who, though compelled to claim the hand of Lady Susan, would have preferred the rival beauty ; wherefore, he most imperiously commanded the captain to claim Lady Trefoil from the hands of Bohun, by swearing that she had engaged herself to him before supper. After which he departed himself to dance with the lady of the Hall.

In spite of the recovery of his spirits during supper, and the calm and indifferent look of Bohun, the captain was appalled at this task, but there was no retreat ; he therefore addressed the lady, reminding her of an engagement, and that he “relied upon the honour of dancing with her.”

Bohun looked surprised, and the lady denied the engagement.

The captain then addressed himself to Bohun, saying, “that, as a matter of course, any *gentleman* hearing his statement that Lady Trefoil was engaged to him, would immediately resign his pretensions.”

“Then, sir, I beg you to understand that I resign nothing to *your* claim ; if Lady Trefoil is satisfied that she has engaged herself to you or anybody else, and wishes me to resign her hand, I must comply ; but, otherwise, I must beg you to stand aside that we may take our places.”

“But, sir,” said the captain, “I must insist upon my right.”

Bohun looked at him with a scornful smile, and said, very calmly, "I hope, captain, that you will not be disappointed ; every man ought to have his right ; and I will make good mine against you if supported by her ladyship."

The fair one had too much regard for our hero to expose him in a duel with so formidable an antagonist as the brave captain, whose immense whiskers and moustaches impressed her with the idea of his being a most formidable champion, she therefore said, "that on recollection she rather thought there was a promise, and she was afraid it was her duty to resign the hand of Mr. Bohun, but she would be careful how she made promises again."

"Then having placed myself at your ladyship's disposal," said Bohun, "your sentence leaves me no alternative, and with much regret I relinquish my title."

The captain then marched in and took possession of the fortress, saying at the same time, in a vaunting style, "none but the brave deserve the fair."

This was obviously intended for Bohun's hearing, and the latter did hear it, and thought it best to pass it by with a laugh, as if he thought it unworthy of notice. The fact was, that Bohun desired very much to be at liberty for a time to reflect on the wonderful discovery he had made, and to consider how to steer his course, for he now knew this fellow to be the same villain who had sought to destroy him in the outset of his career,

and whom he had caused to be convicted of forgery and attempt to murder at Vienna, and to be condemned to the galleys for life. It was not for him to speculate on the subsequent history of the villain, or to make out at once how he had been transformed from a galley slave into a captain of dragoons; he knew that it would not suit his engagements to enter upon such an investigation at that time; but, on the contrary, it was his business to consider how at this very particular crisis he should avoid a collision with the fellow, and he rejoiced in the reflection that, at any rate, their knowledge was mutual, so that, if the one could attack, the other might be prepared with measures of defence.

He left the ball-room immediately in great vexation of spirit, and knowing that the windows of the music-room were only about seven or eight feet above the level of the ground, he got over the balustrade and jumped down on to the grass-plot beneath, and immediately made his way out of the garden, and, passing by the carriages, walked down the declivity of the park from the Hall towards the river, so as to get nearly out of hearing of the music, and there he stood some time ruminating on his immediate course of proceeding, when an accident occurred which put other things out of his head.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

## THE RESCUE.

THERE happened to be a strong current of wind in the upper regions of the atmosphere, which wafted large masses of clouds across the heavens, so that at times the moon was perfectly obscured, while, occasionally, it illuminated the face of the country with its full and brilliant light, and the landscape was suddenly revealed to Bohun, after he had been some time walking forward in comparative darkness; and in the same instant he saw a large dog running up from the river side, apparently in a direction to attack him; he was at a loss what to do, but pulled off his coat, thinking he might perhaps entangle his enemy, and be able to grapple with and choke him; but it turned out to be a false alarm, the dog passed without noticing him and went on towards the Hall. Bohun watched some time, till he felt assured that the animal was intent on some other object, and then was proceeding to put on his coat, when in the direction of the wind he thought he heard shrieks, and, at the same instant, the moon was shrouded by another mass of clouds, the consequence of which was that he saw the light caused by Clarke's

farm being on fire, and it struck him that the dog was in fact a messenger to the Hall. The idea of the forsaken children immediately occurred to him, and without a moment's hesitation he determined to undertake their rescue.

He got his watch off, which was secured in those days by a chain round the neck, and put that in his coat pocket, and rolled the coat up quickly, and deposited it withinside some railing which separated the wood from the park, he then ran to the river side some distance higher up than where the stream entered the wood in order that he might be landed clear of it, and then waded as far from the shore as he could, and swam across the river. It was some labour to him to do this and run up the opposite hill afterwards in his wet clothes, but though it put him rather out of breath, he persevered, and by the help of a tree got over the park wall, he then called to the fellow who was bellowing by the side of the iron rails, and desired him "to come and help," and they ran to the farm together.

He found the back part of the building in full blaze, and of course the stairs from the kitchen were entirely impassable. The side building, where the children were, was covered with thatch, and the fire had caught this, beside having possession of the store-room beneath, with all the back of the house. The rapid glance of Bohun told him, that the only chance was to force an entrance by the family bed-room window, from which he

knew that there was a door way with two or three steps down into the room where the children slept. Casting his eyes round he saw a step-ladder up to the loft over the stable, and with the assistance of the labourer he tore this away from its fastenings, and carried it to the front window of the house which he forthwith smashed to pieces with a pitchfork. He then told his companion to stand on the top of the steps and hollo continually, so that he might find his way back to the window, though his eyes might happen to be closed. After this he entered the room, and threw the clothes off the bed, and out of his way, and opening the children's room door threw the mattress upon the floor through which flames were making their way, he then tore off the door and laid that on the mattress, after which he turned the bed anglewise, so that one of the posts was close to the door way, fortunately the wind entering by the front window of the house supplied that room with air, though at the same time it made the thatch over the children's room burn with increased fierceness; Bohun then grasped the bed post with his right hand, and stepped down on to the platform he had made, and the children being within reach of his left hand, and, as he expected to find them, clung together, he was able to clutch two of their arms at once, and pulled them out on to the floor of the room which he first entered; but was then compelled to fly to the window to save himself

from suffocation, but after inhaling a supply of fresh air he returned almost instantly, secured both children, and gave them to the man outside, who was glad enough to retire with them from the position which he had occupied with much terror. Bohun then got out and on to the ladder also, and while he was descending, the whole building came down with a crash; the back part, consisting in great part of wood-work, being completely burnt away, gave way all at once and dragged down the front with it; and this subsidence and ruin of the whole house filled the air with suffocating smoke, and afterwards the remains made a very great blaze, and the wind carrying this towards the road, no horses or carriages could approach by the lane.

The poor little frightened children were not much hurt, and happily recovered the use of their lungs, and they were somewhat pacified by the caresses of their nurse; and Bohun told her and the lad "to get round outside the lane, and run to the turnpike road, only keeping out of the fire and smoke, and if they saw any one in the road to call out." Bohun was obliged to be very precise and urgent, the lout of a boy being very stupid, and the girl engrossed with the children. He then threw himself down on some straw under a shed, having formed the resolution not to let himself be known, and to return no more to the Hall; in fact, he looked upon this as a happy solution of his difficulties,

which made full amends, for being scorched and cut, and even for the irritation of his lungs, which caused him the most distress and uneasiness.

After some time Clarke came round, and thanked him heartily for what he had done, and asked "what he could do for him in his present sad situation."

"Why, give me something to cover me, and drive me over to Stone Market as soon as you can."

"Oh, but I cannot be spared from here just now, I want to look after my box."

"Well, do you expect any up-coach?"

"Yes, directly."

"That will do for me then."

"Pray, sir," said the poor girl, who was in tears, "won't you speak to mistress?"

"Certainly, come along with me to the inn and I will write for you."

The coach drove up, and naturally they stopped to inquire about the fire, and then happening to have room took Bohun and the girl up, and in ten minutes they were landed at the Swan Hotel in Stone Market, where Bohun partly told his tale and produced money to pay for a good bed, which fortunately he obtained, and gave the poor girl some coffee, and desired her "to go to bed, as he should want her to take a letter about six o'clock:" it was then about two.

The medical man was called up, and immediately



applied twenty-four leeches to Bohun's chest, and after that covered the whole scene of their operations with a large blister, which he finally dressed about six o'clock, and then left his patient to sleep and barley water, with an assistant to watch his pulse.

During these operations Bohun considered the style of correspondence with those whom he knew to be interested in his fate, and wrote the two following letters, and he had the servant of Mrs. Clarke to his bedside at six o'clock, and directed her "to find her way to Mike, the servant of Lady Susan, whom she knew, and deliver the letter into his own hands," and told her "to go by the turnpike road, and look out for him as she went, as Mike perhaps might be on his way to the farm." Mike's letter was as follows:—

"DEAR MIKE,

"Pray take great care of the enclosed, which I do not wish anybody but Lucy to know about, but am desirous that Lady Susan should have it as soon as she wakes, at the same time I would not for the world have her disturbed. I thought the shortest cut to the farm the best, and therefore swam the river, and after all was only just in time to save the children. I wish you would look after my coat, which also has my watch in one of the pockets. I folded it up and put it behind the rails, that is on the side next the wood, not far from the

river. There is a clever doctor here, and the people of the inn are very civil, so that I want for nothing but sleep, and being now pretty comfortable I expect to get a six hours' nap. I am not much the worse, but do not say that, because I have a particular reason for wishing to be thought very ill indeed. Burn this and keep the contents quite close. I annex an order to Mr. Slaney for my portmanteau and other things, and would like to have them rather before twelve, as I shall be awake again by that time. Tell Mrs. Clarke to take back this poor afflicted girl for my sake.

“Yours, A. B.”

And this was the letter to Lady Susan, which was sealed up within Mike's:—

“MOST DEAR AND LOVELY LADY,

“I hope you are not angry with me for not being on the spot to take advantage of your kind promise to dance with me: a most remarkable accident prevented it, and when you have a knowledge of the circumstances that hurried me away, I trust I shall be acquitted, particularly as I know the leniency of my judge. I am well settled here, which I think is the best situation that I could be in, and am very well saving fatigue and want of sleep, and, after this letter is dispatched, I promise myself the enjoyment of a sound nap. Mike is coming to me at twelve, and if I have

anything fresh to communicate I will write again. Probably I may see Mr. Lover before he starts on his rounds, but am not quite certain. I hear that you exposed yourself very much last night, God grant that you may not have taken cold.

“Yours ever, A. B.”



## CHAPTER XXXI.

## THE ALARM.

LADY SUSAN was very much surprised to see the fair one, for whom she had taken so much pains to procure the partner of her choice, take her place in the quadrille with herself and Lord Westcliff with a different person, though it could not cause her much regret. The music struck up, and the two couples went through their task with as much solemnity, indifference and silence as if they had been four mandarins exhibiting at Peking before the Emperor; perhaps Lord Westcliff enjoyed the greatest happiness of the four. He triumphed in the severance of Lady Trefoil from Bohun, and was almost as much gratified to perceive that lady's dislike and contempt for the partner he had forced upon her.

Lady Susan was wrapp'd in wonder, and was impatient for the end of the quadrille to learn the secret of this, but still more so in the anticipation of a claim from Bohun.

Lady Trefoil dismissed her partner peremptorily by refusing his arm at the termination of the dance; and Lady Susan made, soon after, a successful effort to

recover *her* liberty, and went to Lady Trefoil to seek an explanation; but just as the latter was commencing the story of her wrong and insult, and lamenting her weakness in not protesting violently against the insolent interference of this captain, a dreadful shriek was heard from the refreshment-room, and, on making her way there, Lady Susan found that Mrs. Clarke was in hysterics screaming about her children, the cause being made very evident by the general cry that "the farm was on fire." Lady Susan tried to comfort her, but nothing could alter the poor woman's determination to ascertain at once the fate of her children, and the compassionate Lady Susan resolved to accompany her, and the admiral, being implored to lend his aid, procured an open carriage, and also threw over his niece a thick cloak which he had seized in the cloak-room, and, having handed both into the carriage, got in himself. Lord Westcliff jumped in uninvited, and the captain, therefore, took the liberty to mount the box. Of course the postboy made his way over the bridge and through the lodge as fast as he could towards the fire; but rather before they arrived at the spot, they were met by Clarke himself with the children and the servant girl and boy before mentioned, who ought to have remained on the watch indoors, in which case the sad accident would not have happened, but they were led out by some gossip from a neighbouring farm, "just to see how noble the great Hall looked when it were all lit up."

Of course enquiries were made about the means by which the children were saved; and Clarke said, "it was not known who the man was that got them out, but he came over the wall out of the wood."

"A poacher, I dare say," said the captain.

"No doubt," said my lord.

The admiral enquired "if he was much hurt?"

"He lays under the shed," said Clarke, "and seems rayther faint; but I dare say he'll soon come to."

"Well," said Lady Susan, "he must be a noble fellow; I desire, Clarke, that you will get him down to Stone Market, and let the doctor see him directly."

"That I will, my lady."

The admiral ordered the man to drive off.

"Pray, mayn't I come with the children, mistress?" said the poor girl.

"No; go along, and never let me see you again."

And away they drove, Mrs. Clarke and Lady Susan shielding the children from the night air.

On their arrival at the Hall, after an absence of not above twenty minutes, Lady Susan was very much condemned by Lord Bosworth for the folly of running after two farm children, and she did not contest the matter with him, but used every exertion to restore the ball; but when a gentleman asked her to dance, the unaccounted-for absence of Bohun struck upon her heart, and she was obliged to declare "that her nerves were so shocked by the scene she had gone through, that she

found herself incapable." The admiral was watching her, and insisted on her taking some wine. The Lady Trefoil, answering to her urgent desire, engaged in her dance, so that no opportunity offered of speaking to her, and she remained in a grievous state of anxiety about Bohun, and her spirits flagged perceptibly, and the efforts she made in attempting to keep up the spirit of the scene were evidently forced, and distressing to those of any discernment. The party therefore dropped off fast, and the noble marquess and gallant captain, having withdrawn to the refreshment-room, got a bottle of champagne and some eau de vie to console them for the journey on such "a fool's errand," as they called it.

Lord Westcliff praised the successful manœuvre of the captain in separating the widow from Bohun.

"Yes, by ——, but it is all of no use, for you may depend upon it she has fixed her eye on that fellow, and means to have him, and of course she will, for you know how resolute women are when they have made up their minds."

"I will be d——d if I do not prevent it, though," said the peer.

"Why, you are engaged to Lady Susan."

"Yes, but I like this better; I must try and get out of my bargain with Bosworth if possible. He is as poor as a rat, and I do not much care about the girl now; but there is that fellow in the way, you hinted that you could shoot him, or drown him, or something."

“Well, we must talk it over to-morrow, I feel desperately sleepy.”

“And I think that is my case,” said his lordship, “we have had a deuced long day of it,” and he might have added, have taken a great deal too much wine and brandy, for at that time neither of the heroes could speak plain, and it was necessary to assist both of them up stairs.

Lady Susan and the other lady were made aware of this, and were both glad when the time of their own escape arrived, and, in reply to a last enquiry, Lady Susan learnt that her companion had seen no more of Bohun.

There were many people worthy of description at this ball, and many events which it would have been most agreeable to notice, but as there appeared an extended account of it in the *Morning Post* on the next day but one, giving a list of the illustrious personages assembled on the occasion, describing the exquisite charms of the ladies, many of whom were named, and their tasteful and fashionable dresses, the splendid uniform of the cavalry officers, and the peculiarly elegant and refined costume of the members of the Melton Hunt, the superb family plate, the unparalleled and sumptuous supper and refreshments, the hearty and graceful reception of the party by the illustrious host Earl Bosworth and his transcendently beautiful daughter in the ancient family mansion;—I would not venture a comparison



with the eloquent and expanded narrative in those fashionable and trustworthy columns; but I may remark that the editor was not so happy in his prediction, “that the repetition of these charming entertainments might be expected on future occasions to give vivacity to the society of ——shire, now that the brilliant Lady Susan Altham had arisen to irradiate the country.”



## CHAPTER XXXII.

## ADVENTURES AFTER THE BALL.

THE morning was somewhat advanced when Lady Susan retired to her own room, and on arriving there she was not surprised to find her waiting maid Lucy fast asleep. The lady, fatigued and out of spirits, seated herself at the dressing-table, and commenced removing splendid ornaments which, in her existing tone of feeling, she regarded as sadly misplaced, for she could not fail to notice how much the fatigue, excitement, anxiety and incidents of the last few hours had altered her features and expression. When she was last before the glass, preparing for the ball, she thought, and with great truth, that she never looked so well in her life, but her animation and cheerful anticipations were now at an end, and the dear enlivening hope of some sweet converse with Bohun, which perhaps above anything else gave brilliance to her eyes, her features and her smiles, had died away in utter disappointment. She could not help bursting into tears, and the servant happening to wake, was quite shocked at the desponding state of her mistress, and said "she hoped there warn't anything amiss between her ladyship and the marquess."

The lady desired her to hold her tongue, and not speak to her about the marquess.

“I’m sure I beg your ladyship’s pardon, and would not offend you for the world, but surely, my lady, it was a wonderful pleasant ball till that disturbance about the fire. I don’t like to find fault, my lady, but really I think women as have got families ought to stay at home and mind ’em. It was very hard as you, and the captain, and my lord should have to run away to get them children out of the fire, and it put a stop to the whole party, and I’m very glad as some of you warn’t burnt in doing it, but I don’t see any damage to your ladyship’s dress except these spots of blood,” pointing to one inside the arm and one in the skirt in front.

“Well, well, never mind the spots, help me off with my dress, I have had too much fatigue, and that ride with Mrs. Clarke has quite shaken my nerves, and I wish you to go to your own room and return partly undressed, and with a bed-gown, so as to remain here and be at hand in case of my needing assistance.”

When in darkness and silence Lady Susan began thinking over the events of the evening, not a word or a look of Bohun’s could she recall that deserved her blame, and happily she adverted with a very agreeable recollection to the violoncello accompaniment, and the remembrance of that scene had a soothing effect, under the influence of which she sank at last into sleep. At first she slept soundly, but after an hour or two imagi-

nation began to be busy, and she fancied herself in a most disagreeable ball room having to her senses the atmosphere of a place on fire, but all the company, who reflected to her a lurid light, seemed particularly joyous, and darted hither and thither without the least regard to her presence ; at last she saw Lady Trefoil and Bohun taking a leading part, and she endeavoured to follow them, but they entirely disregarded her, and she found herself unable to pursue them. The exceedingly unpleasant sensation caused by this awoke her, and she threw herself out of bed in a state of great agitation and alarm, but the conviction of being in her own chamber gradually established itself in her mind, and she woke the servant and desired her to open the window, so that she might see the time of morning and feel the fresh air.

The landscape was then scarcely discernible, and a mist covered the lower part of the valley, but all the rural prospect was unchanged except where a small amount of smoke could be distinguished rising from the ruins of the farm, and the rooks were already, in the first dawn of light, spreading themselves over the lawn in search of their morning food. She then desired Lucy to put on her bed-gown, and move gently about to see whether anything was going on indoors, but “ ’twas silence all,” and the lady quickly sympathized with the universal calm, and again composed herself to sleep after causing the daylight to be shut out.

For some time her slumbers were sound and refreshing, but again Queen Mab resumed her sway, and she dreamt that she was in her own ball room, with the same lights, the same people, and the aspect of gaiety restored; and to no one more than herself when she beheld Bohun approaching to claim her hand, and they took their place together in the first quadrille, with the faces which were familiar round about her: then an incongruity ensued, for she began talking with those people while the music went on playing, and she was describing with great naïveté her disappointment in the absence of Bohun, when, perceiving that all eyes were directed towards her partner, she instantly turned, and there stood a figure dark, scorched with fire, bleeding—in fact, so horrible an object that she instantly woke with a shriek, and Lucy, waking also, rose up and caught her in her arms and placed her in the easy chair, and then opened the window-shutters to see what troubled her mistress, and applied salts, threw a shawl over her, and so on.

The broad daylight, the presence and kind attentions of Lucy, and the awakening effect of the salts, soon made the dear lady sensible of her situation; but it required a few minutes reflection for qualifying her to decide what steps to take. The guidance of love for once was right; she determined to go as quickly as possible to the scene of the accident, and ascertain who was the preserver of the children, and what had been his subsequent fate.

She therefore commanded Lucy "to set her clothes in order, and go immediately in search of Mike," with orders for him "to get the phaeton ready directly, as she meant to take a ride in the air to refresh and recover her; and he was not to come to the front door, but to wait a little way from the stable-yard in the road towards the lodge;" and by the help of Lucy in dressing her and letting her out, she soon joined him, and told him "to drive towards Clarke's farm."

It was an ascent from the lodge to the farm, and the pace was rather slackened, when a girl met the carriage, and began calling "Mr. Mike; Mr. Mike;" which he was disposed to take no heed of; but the lady thought she remembered her, and made Mike stop, and called the girl to her. "What do you want?"

"Please, your ladyship, only to give this letter to Mr. Mike;" and she accordingly held up the letter.

"And who is it from?"

"Please, your ladyship, it's from Mr. Bohun."

It was directed to Mike. "Do you mind my opening it?"

"Oh! no; certainly, my lady; I dare say there's no secret."

She was surprised to find that it contained one for herself, which she read first, but finding the information very limited, she read Mike's also, which cleared the matter up. The lady was thunderstruck. The whole scene of his exertions was before her. The line he took

was evidently much shorter than the road she had just travelled by the lodge; but it struck her as surpassing even all the previous feats of her lover, and, for an instant, wonder and admiration of his prompt decision and surpassing energy took the lead of all other sentiments; but soon the woman's tenderness prevailed, and her immediate impulse was to go on and ascertain the situation of her beloved, and undertake to nurse him.

Mike saw at once the inexpediency of this, and said "wouldn't it be best to get his sleep quietly over, my lady? The 'Swan' is a very good house, and I'll take care to be there at twelve, and then of course I'll be pretty sharp back, and bring a letter under his own hand and I'll see the doctor too. Only look at that, my lady!" said Mike, moving his whip towards the range of the course. "It's just the same as what he did for us; no living man but Mr. Bohun would ever have thought of such a thing, but he'll come all right, I'm sure he will; only I'd better get home in quick time and look after his things and then your ladyship may get some rest, for dear me, my lady, I hope you'll forgive me, but you really seem to want it sadly."

Immediate return was certainly best for all parties, and Mike prevailed, and in a quarter of an hour Lady Susan was in bed, and slept two or three hours undisturbed, having previously arranged to send an answer to Bohun's letter by Mike; and this letter was obtained by Mike at half-past eleven, and delivered with the

portmanteau, coat and all other things to Bohun, who had ordered himself to be called at twelve o'clock : and Mike found him very weak in body, but not faint in spirit, for he said he felt satisfied that his lungs were in no danger of inflammation ; and he listened with great delight to Mike's story of being called up, and the little incidents of the morning excursion, after which he had the delight of reading the following letter from Lady Susan :—

“ MY DEAR ALFRED,

“ Your disappearance last night caused me much uneasiness and alarm, so that I found bed not a place of rest, and left it at early dawn to go to Clarke's farm in search of you, and when near the top of the hill I fortunately met your trusty little messenger, and from the letter *to Mike*, which I took the liberty to read as well as my own, learned your extraordinary course of adventure since we parted.

“ Your achievement, the whole scene of which I was there able to take a view of from the phaeton, filled me with amazement, and I indulged in a proud sentiment that no one but my own hero would even have thought of such a feat. I much desired to go forward to your hotel, but Mike strongly dissuaded, and indeed I could not help feeling that the interruption of your sleep might be very harmful, I therefore turned homewards, taking the little nurse up by my side, but, oh ! my dear



Alfred, how shocked I was by the account she gave me of the frightful danger you exposed yourself to, and of your hair-breadth escape from a horrible death. It was a great thing to save the poor innocent children, but, my dear friend, when the odds were so great against your success, ought you not to have thought of the two lives you exposed to imminent hazard in making the attempt.

“Pray take this to your heart, my dear Alfred, that your peril is my peril, and I hope that the possibility of my being the sufferer will prevent your running into danger in future. I fully appreciate your kind intention to soften the blow to me by your very guarded letter, but, upon the whole, am better satisfied in knowing the worst; pray let me hear whether I can see you on Sunday: of course there must be a postponement of other important arrangements.”

The waste of spirits in a ball can only be recruited by a long period of repose, and this was so much exemplified at Conquest Hall, that the muster for breakfast on the morning after had not taken place at half-past eleven, at which time Lord Bosworth and the admiral had almost resolved to take breakfast by themselves, when the guests began to appear, and dropped in one after the other, so that in a short time all were assembled, as if the need of refreshment had actuated them all at the same time, but Lady Susan arrived last, and her papa looked so angry that she was obliged to apologize.

The vivacity of Lady Trefoil was fully restored, and she had recovered her fatigue better than any other lady ; perhaps her exertions had been much less.

After a short time the admiral inquired for young "qui tam," as he called the lawyer.

"I suppose," said Lord Bosworth, "he is gone, for he said he must be off this morning;" and then addressing the butler, who was attending in the room, he said, "Slaney, I suppose Mr. Bohun is gone away."

"Can't say, my lord, I ain't seen him this morning."

The admiral suggested that he should go and look in his room.

On his return he announced that Mike was just taking away Mr. Bohun's portmanteau, and hat and boots and all things that were in the room, to carry them to the Swan at Stone Market, for Mr. Bohun was there now and had not slept at the Hall the preceding night.

"Ah," said the gallant captain, "I observed that he was mighty sweet upon one of the young women who gave out ices and coffee from the other side of the table in the refreshment-room."

Lady Trefoil dryly remarked, "that he was talking with Mrs. Clarke about her children."

"Then," said Lord Bosworth, who did not enjoy this conversation, "I suppose that is all you know about the matter."

"Please, your lordship," said the butler, "there's a

report that Mr. Bohun saved Mrs. Clarke's children, and Ralph Flock, the gamekeeper, just now brought in a coat, a dress coat, with a watch and chain in the pocket, and it's my belief that it's Mr. Bohun's coat."

"Where did he find this coat?"

"Please you, my lord, he was looking out in the wood betimes in the morning, and had his little terrier with him, and Ralph says he noticed the dog puzzling about something near the rails, and when he came up to the place he found this coat; he tells me it was just inside the rail near the river."

The Lady Trefoil gave a slight shriek, but before any other inquiries could be made, it was announced that Mr. Lover, the doctor from Stone Market, was here.

This gentleman was desired to walk in immediately, and his news about Bohun was in great request, particularly on the part of the admiral and the ladies.

Mr. Lover said very gravely, "It is a serious business, but my patient submits to treatment and to being kept very quiet, and I trust I shall bring him through."

"Is he much burnt?" said Lady Trefoil.

"Pretty much cut and burnt, my lady, but I think nothing of that, the injury to his lungs is the dangerous part of the case. I put twenty-four leeches on his chest, and when they came off I covered the whole scene of their operations with a blister, which rose well, and he now breathes softly, his pulse is reduced, and he sleeps calmly."

"Is it necessary to send to his friends?" said Lord Bosworth.

"No, my lord, I do not think that. Either my assistant or I will keep constant watch over him, and he is so close to my laboratory that everything can be supplied immediately."

"But what the devil is all this about!" said Lord Westcliff, who had been drinking his tea and eating what toast he could get down during the doctor's recital.

"Oh!" said Mr. Lover, "I thought, my lord marquess, that you had known it was Mr. Bohun that got the children out of the burning house last night."

"But," said the admiral, "what puzzles me is how he got there."

"Why, admiral, he ran across the park, swam the river, got up the hill on the other side and over the wall, and by taking that straight line he got there before anybody else."

The admiral got up and looked out of the window. "No doubt it is the shortest road, but, upon my life, it shows wonderful resolution and power, I should never have thought of a landsman venturing on such an enterprise. This Bohun would have been a capital fellow for boarding and cutting out."

"But," said Lady Trefoil, with the tears running down her face, "what's the use of his saving the children if he's to be burnt to death himself!"

"Burnt to death!" said the admiral, "nonsense, three

or four days in hospital will set him all right again, won't it, doctor?"

"I should be sorry to see him out of bed within that time, admiral: his recovery depends upon a continuance of perfect repose. He is very low now, and I mean to keep him so. In fact, my chief business is to take care of his chest, and in keeping him still for that, I secure the healing of everything else. I expect that he will be all right in a few days, except weakness, and the loss of his hair on the left side of his head."

"Dear me," said Lady Trefoil, "he must have been in the fire."

"Certainly, my lady, he's a good deal scorched on the left arm and ear, and his eyes are much irritated and inflamed at present, but he's not of a full habit, so that I don't much regard all that."

Lord Bosworth expressed himself "very much obliged for this visit," and bowed the doctor out.

The admiral desired "his kindest compliments to Mr. Bohun and to express his regret that he could be of no assistance, as he was going to town to-morrow."

Lord Bosworth then took great pains to divert the attention of the party, recommending "shooting to the gentlemen" and promising "to drive the ladies in two or three hours to Sloe Copse, which was about two miles off, and to take some things for luncheon."

So the party broke up, and Lady Susan suggested "the necessity of her seeing the maître d'hôtel, touching

the luncheon and dinner to be provided for their reduced party." The inexperienced young lady thought this a matter of extreme simplicity, and that out of the vast spread which she saw last night, there must be ample funds for setting out a luncheon and dinner to-day with the help of a joint or two; but how was the poor innocent shocked when the cook who furnished everything told her that "he had completed his contract, and that if anything more was wanted it must be supplied by agreement, and paid for beforehand."

The lady was struck with wonder at this, and ran to her father to ask "what was to be done," and she was shocked to see him quite abashed by the intelligence.

"I lost my money last night to that Captain Smith, I think he cheated me," said his lordship; "but this is a provoking dilemma, you must try to help your poor father through, *you* might borrow of Lady Trefoil, perhaps, or Hutchinson, he must have saved something, the party here will all have departed to-morrow morning, and you shall go back to your aunt, and I will make my way to the Continent, for I think this marquess is not in earnest."

"Earnest! dear me, it's very plain, papa, that he infinitely prefers Lady Trefoil. She's very handsome, and I believe has a large independent fortune."

"Well, my dear, we shall be quiet to-morrow, do the best you can with this fellow, I think ten pounds ought to satisfy him."

The man was not to be satisfied with that sum, but

finally agreed "to do it handsomely, including wine, for double the money;" and she went up stairs and got the second of the two bank notes which Mr. Hargrave had given her, and the *traiteur* gave his contract in writing, and performed it so well that the entertainment was concluded to the entire satisfaction of the superb and penniless donor of the *fête*, as well as the guests.

After the conclusion of her bargain, Lady Susan showed the contract to her father, and then, bursting into tears, told him "that she was quite unable to take part in the hilarity of a wood party, and he must allow her to retire to her bed for a time to compose herself by sleep."

Before fulfilling this intention, however, she determined on a bold stroke, namely, to see Mike; and she sent her little page to desire him "to come to her in the butler's room."

Mike gave as good a report of our hero as he could; better than that of the doctor, but said "he was in a dark room, and wrote the letter which he gave to her ladyship on his back, with a pencil, Mike forming a writing desk for him by holding a slate which he borrowed for the purpose."

The interview was very brief, the lady desiring more than anything else to read Bohun's letter, which was as follows :—

"I am confined to a particular posture in order that the blister on my breast may have fair play, and my

position is not convenient for writing. Three days will make me quite well, and tolerably strong, though not a Samson or a Hercules. I propose to go a stage on Sunday afternoon. As to my foolhardiness about the children, for which you tenderly reprove me, remember a promise I made at the time of the christening: promises made in a church ought to be held sacred, but I will make none such in future without your concurrence: pray consider *the arrangement made* to be final; but, oh! what an advantage it would be if you could manage to look in here on Sunday about twelve.

“Yours ever, A. B.”

The lady soon resolved that her lover should not be disappointed of this suggested interview, and the mode of accomplishing it became the chief object of her study at the time when she devoted herself to repose. The clearance of the house, which she foresaw must take place the following day, removed many obstacles; and the consideration that her lover was free from all manner of danger produced a calm in her feelings, and enabled her to have a delightful sleep of two hours, which revived her spirits and activity, and enabled her to go through the succeeding part of the day with a vivacity which many of the party wondered at, for they imagined that the preference for Lady Trefoil, which the marquess took no pains to disguise, must have caused her great mental suffering. However, she betrayed no disquiet, and not



the slightest indication of being piqued by the manner of the marquess; while the conversation was general, and when music was introduced, she took the greatest pains to display the talents of Lady Trefoil, and commended her performances much beyond their desert.

The two young ladies staying in the house were very much touched and surprised by the conduct of Lady Susan on this occasion, and in talking of it after they retired to their bed rooms, they agreed "that nothing could be imagined more high-spirited and noble than her conduct under this disappointment of her hopes."

Her nap did not terminate till after the departure of the ladies for the wood party, and when she rose she took some luncheon with the admiral, by which she was still further recruited, and the pair then strolled out of doors for a walk in the park, and it being a very pleasant mild day they sat down on a bench under the shade of some trees, not far from the bridge, and commenced a conversation about the visitors generally and the history of their proceedings.

After some time the admiral said, "to tell you the truth, my dear niece, I am much disappointed by this party; I was invited here to celebrate the announcement of your intended alliance with Lord Westcliff, and I find the thing all off, and this lord insolent enough to betray his preference for another woman, instead of being intent beyond everything on the fulfilment of his contract with

you or your father. I am so enraged that I think seriously of calling him out, and am disgusted that my brother submits with such calmness to the fellow's insolence and breach of faith."

"Not for worlds, my dear uncle, would I have you incur any risk about this matter; and, indeed, you will see the absurdity of doing so when I tell you, as I have told my aunt and my father from the beginning, that I abhor this man, nothing would have induced me to marry him, and, therefore, I am quite delighted by this unexpected deliverance from further struggle, which would have made us all miserable."

"So, then, there's no harm done after all?"

"None, but the defeat of my father's object; which, I suppose, was to provide for me, for I am sorry to say he seems to be very poor."

"Poor, indeed, my dear, why he borrowed five pounds of me yesterday, and I have hardly money to get back to town."

She then showed the contract with the *traiteur*, and said that "most fortunately she had *twenty pounds* of her own money for effecting it, and, I think, my dear uncle, this poverty must be known to others, and it is not improbable that the marquess may have obtained information of it, and, if so, it would not heighten his desire for the match."

"Why, you are painting him even worse than my

notion of the fellow! I should like to see the burly coxcomb driven up the hill there by an enemy, and then made to get over the wall."

"Ah! my dear uncle, that is a light infantry exploit."

"Yes, my dear, and he is one of the heavies. I am very much taken with that young spark who did it," continued the admiral, "and do not like to leave him in a disabled state."

"I don't think there is the least doubt, my dear uncle, that he will be on your track to London within a few days; and, of course, he will be very proud of a visit from you in the Temple."

"Do you know anything against him, Susan?"

"Why, my dear uncle," said the young lady in great amazement, "have you not heard that he saved my life, and that of my aunt? What could have led you to dream of such an inquiry?"

"Nay, *I* never heard anything of him good or bad before this visit, but when the news arrived during breakfast this morning of his surprising effort, and the injury to himself, and his suffering, and when the tears of all the other ladies denoted their sympathy, and that tender interest which brave and generous actions inspire, I observed that you betrayed not the same natural emotion as they, and it made me dubious whether there might not be something behind, calculated to detract from my notion of his character."

“ Ah ! my dear uncle, I felt more, perhaps, than any of those bodies ; but I had learnt the truth some hours before the time of breakfast, and had given vent to my feelings in solitude ; beside, which, I did not choose to open out my heart before that goose, Lord Westcliff, or his villanous companion.”

“ My dear niece, this is extraordinary language, I don’t mind your calling Westcliff a goose, but how can you apply such a very decided epithet to the captain ?”

“ Your question, my dear uncle, shows that you have never looked this fellow full in the face, for upon that there is an autograph which never deceives. I confess that *my* penetration has been aided by a warning, but I will give you an instance of the man ; I got Mr. Bohun engaged as a partner to Lady Trefoil just previous to the renewal of dancing after supper, and he was leading her to take her place in the quadrille, when this fellow, I have no doubt by command of Westcliff, came up, and under pretence of a promise from the lady made before supper ‘ claimed her for the next dance,’ Bohun told him, ‘ that he placed himself at the order of his partner, and would only relinquish his position by her command ;’ and the poor lady for whom I had taken some pains to get Bohun, being as she afterwards told me ‘ afraid of a challenge and a duel,’ for which I very much commend her, actually surrendered to this fellow, and gave up Bohun ; upon which the vulgar creature was so elated

that he said impudently ‘none but the brave deserve the fair.’ I dare say the low-minded wretch had never read the noble poem to which the sentiment belongs, but had picked it up from some copy book at a charity school.”

“Well done, my gentle niece,” said the admiral, “but how did Bohun act?”

“Why, he stared at the fellow and then laughed; and I have never seen Mr. Bohun since; but as for this Smith, I wish that he and I were no longer in the same house, for I think him bad enough to be dangerous to me as he has proved himself to my father, though in a different manner.”

“Then the hero of the fire is, I suppose, the exact reverse of this man?”

“That is my opinion, certainly, my dear uncle; but pray let me induce you to ask Mike, my aunt’s coachman, who is here, he will make you acquainted with the manner of my first introduction to Mr. Bohun. I was inside a carriage, surrounded by dangers, and shut my eyes and ears against the scenes and sounds of horror, but *that Mike* was of course on the box, and is able to explain all, for most fortunately he maintained his presence of mind throughout.”

“Well, I will find the coachman directly, for I should like to know all about Bohun before I go up to town.”

“I wish, my dear uncle, you were not going up to-morrow.”

“I have taken my place, my dear, otherwise I would

have liked to stop in order to take care of you, but I feel a difficulty about the supply of money, my style of travelling is on the top of the coach, and the money your father has borrowed of me disables me from any other mode."

"Well, dear uncle, we cannot perform impossibilities. What time does your coach set out?"

"It is a coach that comes from a distance down the country, and I have lodged a sovereign at the inn to secure me the preference (if there be a place vacant) when it stops there to change horses."

"And at what time?"

"Seven o'clock."

"Then I will ride there with you; the airing before breakfast will do me good."

In that moment our heroine formed a new scheme, namely, to travel to town with her uncle, though she did not then make him acquainted with it, but in the course of the day she resolved the means and the plan, and went to bed perfectly satisfied of the feasibility of her scheme.

In the meantime Bohun slept away his time, but towards evening he insisted on being amply supplied with gruel, for he was satisfied that the lungs were not suffering from inflammatory action, and did not choose to let himself down so low as to be incapable of the exertion requisite for his proposed journey to London.

During the afternoon he sat up and wrote the following letter to Mr. Hargrave:—

“Swan Hotel, Stone Market.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I am confined at this place by a most unexpected accident, viz. I was called away from the midst of a grand party at Conquest Hall to rescue two children from a burning house, and in doing this got myself somewhat injured, and came directly to the doctor here, who applied leeches and so on, and now I am free from inflammation, and confined *by him*, not by my disease, but have submitted to be the subject of his healing art till Sunday or Monday.

“I should not have troubled you with this dull history, but for a remarkable adventure somewhat interesting to *yourself*. Lord Westcliff came to this ball, and brought in his train a sort of aide-de-camp or led captain, a bold dragoon with profusion of black hair, whiskers, moustaches, beard and brogue, who was announced as Captain Terence Smith. Having no great esteem for these monsters of fierceness, I shyed this fellow, but perceived that, when I was introduced, the brave man seemed to lay aside his valour for an instant and to change colour, and this did not escape me, though I seemed as indifferent as possible; but fortune favoured me in the course of the evening with an opportunity of satisfying myself that this hero was no other than my quondam foe Monk. How he should have

escaped from the galleys and been able to make his appearance in England in this character and obtain such rank in the British army is miraculous ; but in spite of the disguise, and all the improbability of the case, I feel sure of the identity, and lay the facts before you for your private consideration ; hitherto there has been no explosion, and he will retain his rank for the present. My private opinion is, that he is an ally of his colonel in gambling schemes.

“ Yours, with great regard,

“ ALFRED BOHUN.”

This letter was sealed, and the assistant of Mr. Lover put it into the post himself ; and, moreover, it arrived in course, and gave the old gentleman a great shock, but he recovered his energy in a moment, and ordered his travelling chariot to be fitted up, and his valet to attend him at six o'clock with four horses, having determined to see Bohun the next day, and, if possible, make him return to London in the chariot. It was his rule to traverse the country at the rate of ten miles an hour, so he had no difficulty in getting to Stone Market the next day at twelve o'clock with very little limitation of his ordinary rest.

The marquess and the captain had so effectually drugged themselves that they experienced great difficulty



in preparing for breakfast on the morning after the ball, and the two heroes scarcely concealed their delight on hearing the surgeon's story which had affected in so different a manner other members of the breakfast party. But the captain in particular regarded it as the most fortunate event that could have happened, and in the course of the day reasoned himself into the belief that he had escaped recognition, and that he might avoid the chance of meeting his dreaded adversary again: but in the evening, after retiring to bed, he was summoned to an interview with his patron, during which the latter urged him vehemently to the fulfilment of his engagement "to put Bohun out of the way," which, as he said, "could not be difficult now that he was so enfeebled, that the work was more than half finished already, and the captain, being a very strong man, could easily put an end to the fellow in such a way that he might appear to have died in the course of nature."

It was in vain for the captain to contend "that the total and immediate removal of Bohun from these quarters was inevitable, and that as soon as he could move he would of course return to London, because, having no friends in this part of the country to receive him, he would not remain at an expensive inn any longer than he could possibly help; beside," said he, "you wanted me to-morrow night, to aid in carrying off the lady of the hall."

"Yes; but I have changed my mind about that, she

is a pretty girl enough, but I cannot at this time afford to marry a woman without money, and have therefore fixed on the widow, and she is so confoundedly taken with this d——d Bohun that I cannot succeed till he's out of the way."

"I wish you had communicated this determination sooner," said the captain, "for a day makes a great deal of difference; but, if you insist upon it, I must try my luck to-morrow night, but then you must let me have some money, for I may be obliged to run, and I can't get off with nothing in my pocket."

"Upon my soul I'm very short myself, but I'll give you an order on the agent for a hundred, and the paymaster can't refuse to cash it for you."

"Well, if you don't alter your mind in the course of the night, and will give me the cheque in the morning, I will venture it, for I hate the fellow mortally; but, I must say, I think he has no idea of Lady Trefoil, because when I carried her off he appeared totally indifferent and laughed, and all through the night he appeared so much of a general lover that I think he is under an engagement elsewhere."

"Pooh! pooh! that may be, but people don't throw away such a chance as the widow for a trifle, therefore I should like to make sure of him. When he's out of the way she may take a new view of things."

The cause of the mortal hatred of our hero which each of these worthies felt was kept entirely in the back

ground. It is a rule among rogues not to trust one another more than needful.

On the Saturday morning Lady Susan was on the alert to accompany her uncle ; and, when in the phaeton, she most earnestly implored him to take her to London with him without mentioning it to her father ; and the coach happening to arrive fully laden with a party going to play a cricket match, he took back his sovereign, but he expressed his dislike to taking on himself the very serious responsibility she desired, but her tears and entreaties at length made an impression upon him ; and, furthermore, he was influenced by the consideration that her father would immediately seize every farthing that she could muster, which would go after the rest, for she informed him that men were then in the house empowered to seize everything ; that is to say, they were in fact the proprietors of everything.

“ But will you be better off in London ? ”

“ Yes, for a few days ; I must write and pacify my aunt, after which her servant Mike, who is now here, will, I have no doubt, be sent to London for me.”

“ But where are you to go to in London ? ”

“ I know a clergyman, Mr. Foster, who is very amiable and sincere, and his wife is good and kind also, and they would gladly take me in for such a short time as may be needful. Pray make inquiry yourself, my dear uncle, and you will find it all as I say, and you will render me

a great service if you enable me to get away from the wreck, because the house in London is just in the same ruined state as this."

"Who is best acquainted with the state of things here?"

"I should apprehend that Mr. Hutchinson, the steward, knows most; and, perhaps, if you asked on my account he would let you know more than I myself am acquainted with, and I dare say that the man on the box may have picked up a good deal of information."

The admiral did not let much of the day pass before he got an interview with Hutchinson, who confirmed the dismal tale of Lady Susan, and even enhanced its distressing features, and broke out into grievous lamentations about this last expenditure, in which a large sum of money had been lavished away to no purpose, which would have paid debts that caused sad misery to some of the poor creditors.

"But where did the money come from?"

"Oh! the poor old Lady Bewdley; she had a great fancy that her niece should marry a marquess, and now it's all come to nothing, and the money's gone, and my great fear is, that she'll take violent offence and never forgive the dear young lady."

"Then you think there is to be no match after all?" said the admiral.

"Why, sir, I think that's the only good part, for the young lady's an angel, and the marquess is nothing of a

gentleman, and she never would have enjoyed any happiness with him."

The admiral said, "I will write myself from London, and say that Westcliff has behaved shamefully, for it would be a sad thing for Lady Susan to lose the chance of an independence from her aunt."

"Yes; but I hope the old lady has tied it up safe, so that my lord cannot get the handling of it, otherwise it's all certain to go to the gaming table, every baubee."

"Poor thing, she knows nearly all that you have told me, and wishes me to take her to town."

"Why, the house there is empty, and sold or let, that will never do."

"No; she proposes to go to a friend of hers, one Mr. Foster, a clergyman in London, whose wife she speaks of in high terms, and she can stay there till she gets her aunt's permission for her to return. I dare say, when the whole matter is explained, the old lady will be glad to have her again."

"I should think so too, after all it's very like that Lady Susan's the best judge of her own affairs, for she seems a sensible douce young lady, and really it might save her a great deal of harassing disquiet if she went away from her father just at this time."

Mike was able to tell the admiral a great many particulars of the inmates of the house, and he so frightened the veteran, that finally he quite concurred in the views of his niece on the subject of removal.

Most glad was Lady Susan to dispatch a note by Mike in the evening to her lover, and he was no less rejoiced at so prudent an arrangement, and Mike also informed Bohun "that she proposed to call the next day, impersonating Mrs. Clarke."

After which Mike set out to walk back to the Hall between seven and eight o'clock, being the bearer of a packet from Bohun containing funds for the journey. It was a moonlight night, but the moon was not high in the heavens, and Mike, who always left our hero with regret, was walking gently forward on the shaded side of the street, when he saw a man riding slowly down the hill by which the town is approached, and, as he had no saddle-bags, it struck him that it might be the doctor, and he pushed on to the turnpike, by the light of which he judged that he would be able to see the countenance whether the rider stopped or not, but even before a close approximation he began to think the traveller a different sort of person, however he still kept in the shade of the gate house, under a slight impulse of curiosity to see the man's face, which, to his no small astonishment, turned out to be that of Captain Terence Smith, the very man whom Bohun had been warning Mike to protect Lady Susan from. He stood quite still for a time, and then watched the gallant hero into the inn. Mike knew that he was a dangerous villain, and a confederate of the marquess, and it struck him that he very likely went there with some ill design

upon Bohun. He, therefore, tracked him to the inn with great regard to his own privacy, and observed that the horse was taken to the stable, and that the captain, who was in plain clothes, did not go into the public room, but was shown into the cold dull private chamber on the other side of the gateway. After this Mike took some time to consider what was best to be done, for he was satisfied of the danger of his friend, and Bohun had before expressed a firm determination that he should not stay with him, but go home to keep watch at the Hall. In this dilemma he called to mind a prank he had heard of, which consisted in screwing up the doors of bed rooms, sometimes practised as a joke at college, and said also to be a trick of travellers who want to get the lead of competitors in buying or selling. He therefore went to an ironmonger's shop, and provided himself with a gimlet, screw driver and screws fitted for the purpose in view, after which he stole back and made his way quietly to the invalid, and told him in an under voice what he had seen, and also propounded his protective scheme, and produced the implements for carrying it into effect. Bohun praised his foresight and sagacity very much, and said "he would adopt his plan, though he did not think he should have been caught napping, for he said he had a sense of danger from that villain, and showed his pistols loaded and in perfect order, but said that he much preferred this sort of defence, and would make the entrance doors to his room

so secure that they could not be forced;" and, in fact, by this precaution of Mike's, he secured his life without a mortal fight, and got a good night's rest, for the villain in vain attempted an entrance, and was obliged to take flight at early dawn, as he had to show at head quarters on Sunday morning.

The colonel gave vent to his disappointment in the most brutal terms of complaint, so that he was obliged to promise to go over and effect his purpose during church time, and he got leave of absence for the purpose, and walked out of the town so as to be picked up at eleven o'clock by a coach which dropped him at the entrance of Stone Market, in half an hour; and, after he had seen the coach clear the town, he walked quickly on, and entered the inn, and was proceeding up stairs, when he was met by the chamber-maid who enquired his business, and when he said he wanted to go and speak to Mr. Bohun, she told him he could not, for a lady was with him, and he desired not to be interrupted while she was there.

"And pray who is Mrs. Clarke?"

"Why, she's the mother of the children what Mr. Bohun saved out of the fire."

"Well, I can wait;" so saying he descended the stairs, and walked about the inn yard, and sometimes the street; when after a time he heard the noise of wheels and a travelling carriage was seen approaching, and instead of driving past, as the captain anticipated, it



turned into the yard ; and when the door was opened out stepped Mr. Hargrave.

The captain happened by some fatal curiosity to be on the watch at the spot, so that their eyes met as that gentleman was alighting, and without an instant's hesitation he said, "Hallo, Monk, how the devil did you escape from the Austrian galleys?"

"My name's not Monk, sir," said the fellow ; and the waiter officiously said "no, sir, this gentleman is Captain Smith, of the marquess's dragoons."

"We shall see," said Mr. Hargrave with great contempt ; "show me Mr. Bohun's room."

The entrance of the chariot and four had attracted the chamber-maid, and she observed "that he could not go in to Mr. Bohun at present for a lady."

"Stuff!" said the old gentleman ; "show me directly which is his room."

The poor woman immediately succumbed to the power of the great man, and without further hesitation stepped quickly up and knocked at the door of Bohun, "who's there?" said the latter from within.

"A great gentleman from town, sir," replied the chamber-maid.

Bohun had heard the chariot, and aware of the energy of his old friend, he went immediately to the door, and both the inmates warmly greeted him, after Bohun had again shut and locked it. "I am quite ashamed, sir," said Bohun, "of causing you this fatiguing journey."

“ My poor fellow, I don’t care a straw about it,” said the old gentlemen, “ now that I find you so much recovered.”

“ Your kindness is all the same, but the term ‘ poor fellow ’ is misapplied to a man who is visited by the first merchant in the world,—and the loveliest lady in England,—and in both cases out of pure love and affection.”

“ What ! Lady Susan,” said the old gentleman, “ can you be guilty of the imprudence of casting in your lot with this scapegrace ? and before he has made a fortune too ? You will be thought to have taken a strange step. Have you considered the change in position—and the difference in the style of living—and in associates ? I fear the change will cause you much disappointment in the result.”

“ My dear sir,” said the lady, “ I have considered everything. In the early period of my acquaintance with Alfred, he himself laid before me the various objections to this change that you now allude to, and you must forgive me for saying, that

‘ Truth from his lips prevails with double sway ;’

but now I have had time (years indeed) to think of them, and to observe what it is reasonable to desire and to hope for, and I feel that I shall gain happiness which I could never dream of in my present state, and that my society will consist of very superior men and women compared with those whose society I may lose. If, indeed, you

could tell me that Alfred was likely to be unkind or unfaithful it might possibly make me hesitate."

"No," said Mr. Hargrave, interrupting her, "I could not say that of him; on the contrary, if I had another daughter I would sooner trust her with him than with any man living."

"God bless you for that saying!" said the lady, going up and kissing him; "Alfred has told me that you have been a father to him and I will be a daughter to you."

"And you shall be my dear children," said the old gentleman, with tears in his eyes, "and as you are determined to travel through life together, I will give you two thousand pounds to furnish your house and help you in the outset of the journey."

Their expressions of gratitude were, of course, renewed in the warmest terms; and Mike coming to the inn door with the phaeton, the lady said a tender and brief farewell. The fact was, that every thing in the nature of business had been discussed and arranged previous to the arrival of Mr. Hargrave; and letters written to Mrs. Foster and Skinner to prepare them for their part in the events about to take place; Mr. Hargrave handed her into the carriage, and they got home through the Park and entered the back way; and Lady Susan resumed her own character in a twinkling while the servants were at dinner.

When the two gentlemen were left alone, Mr. Hargrave mentioned the receipt of the letter, and his astonishment,

almost incredulity, as to the discovery it communicated ; but told Bohun, “ that when he alighted from the carriage the first object he saw was this very fellow, and that he addressed him at once by his right name, and the fellow skulked.”

“ I know,” said Bohun, “ that he attempted my door in the night, but, being warned, I had well screwed it up, so that I slept in security, but he’ll be off now.”

“ Yes,” said Mr. Hargrave, “ if I don’t catch him.”

Bohun was overjoyed at the turn things had taken, and particularly pleased to be the companion of the old gentleman, and to make the journey in a carriage so exquisitely prepared for the comfort of travellers. The waiter was summoned to know about dinner, and an enquiry was then made about the person whom Mr. Hargrave saw at the entrance ; but he was gone, and had taken the road towards London.

Mr. Hargrave ordered his valet “ to see to the horses being very well fed, and to get his own dinner ;” and the doctor was desired “ to attend as soon as convenient to himself ;” and considered himself very well paid by a fee of five guineas, and a guinea was added for his assistant, and at the very same hour of the afternoon that Mr. Hargrave set out from London, he started again on his return thither, and found the horses all waiting his arrival at the different inns.

Before they left Stone Market, Bohun ordered a chaise to be ready for the admiral at the house at eight

o'clock next morning, explaining "that he would be carried from the Hall to the inn in the phaeton."

"What will this desperado do now?" said Mr. Hargrave.

"He will run, sir. He was at the inn last night, and again to-day, for the purpose of murdering me; to-day the presence of Lady Susan and your arrival have kept him off; last night he tried hard to get in, but in vain. I think that since he has had your reclamation in addition to mine, he will not venture back to the regiment, and he will be aware of a sharp look out being kept up in London; and it strikes me he will be off."

"I shall be at the Horse Guards to-morrow, and Bow Street also; my object is to keep you safe, my dear boy. How do you feel about the lady that you have left behind?"

"She has a good protector in my old friend Mike, and the admiral is pledged to take care of her; but the fact is, that the Jews in possession of the house are extremely vigilant in the care of their property, and for a short time (not many days though) the Hall will not be an insecure place; beside which, Lady Susan tells me that it is quite notorious that the marquess has changed to a new love, so that there is no danger of pursuit from him."

Bohun thought afterwards that it would be most inconvenient at this juncture to be called upon to give evidence, and aid in prosecuting this fellow, and per-

suaded Mr. Hargrave to go no further at present than to request inquiry at the Horse Guards, for he was satisfied that the villain, knowing that the halter was all but round his neck, would not attempt to face the danger, but flee most probably to America.

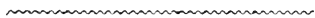
Notwithstanding the ease of the carriage, and that he had talked very little, Bohun was obliged to retire to bed immediately after a very slight refreshment; but though he slept soundly for a few hours, he contrived to be up so as to have a little conversation with Mr. Hargrave at breakfast, and then told him "that the marriage was to be at —— at nine o'clock the following morning."

"Upon my word, young fellow, I think you are very precipitate; what will the lady say?"

"I think, sir, she is disposed, like myself, to follow an early lesson I had from you, namely, that when it is quite determined to do a thing, the sooner it is done the better."

"But the lady will not have her clothes!"

"The ceremony can be completed, nevertheless."



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## TAKING THE INVENTORY.

WHEN the phaeton stopped at the Swan next morning, Mike enquired very calmly, "if he should wait?" This staggered the lady for a moment, but she recovered and said, "the admiral is going to take me to visit a lady. I will write to you."

The admiral with his veiled heroine, for Lady Susan was afraid to show her face, went gaily on to London; and Mike returned to the Hall, not absolutely out of spirits, but missing the excitement which had made him happy while he was actively engaged for his dear young friends, and rather anxious whether things would go right with them, when, about noon, an express arrived at the Hall with a letter for the reputed owner of it, which was from Mr. Oakley—the purport being to inform his lordship "that Lady Bewdley had had a paralytic stroke, and was speechless, and in an alarming state." This made his lordship most anxious to get to Maidenthorpe, but he had no money, and he knew no means of getting a few pounds, and he was actually reduced to begging five pounds (he could get no more) from Mr. Hutchinson.

The messenger told him which way he had come, and advised him to hasten across the country to catch a down coach, which would land him near Stagbrook.

The peer caught at the idea, and sending for Mike, desired "he would get out the phaeton, and drive him over, for *he* was perfectly acquainted with the road and could direct him."

At first Mr. Isaacs made a difficulty, but on reconsidering the matter, he thought his lordship would be better off the premises, and was satisfied with Mike's undertaking to return the equipage, and suffered them to depart, and between three and four o'clock, coachman, carriage and horses were all safe back.

In the mean time the lotting of the furniture and effects went regularly on, and after Mike had given his horses some corn, he went up to talk with Lucy about the important change in *their* circumstances which this event gave rise to; but he found that the fair one had dried her tears, and was in warm altercation with a Jew and the auctioneer and his scribe, who had, unexpectedly by her, made an entrance into her young mistress's rooms, and were noting down all the furniture and effects, and, moreover, insisting on seeing the inside of the wardrobes, drawers and boxes containing the dresses and various apparel of the young lady.

Mike thought this ought to be resisted, and sent Lucy to beg "that Mr. Hutchinson would come and advise."

When that good man came, he looked over the docu-



ment, and said, "why, certainly, this gives you a great deal; but it does not give you any of the clothes or ornamental dresses of any kind which belong to Lady Susan."

"Vy, she's an infant!"

"Yes; but these are things given to her by her aunt, Lady Bewdley, and paid for by that lady, and therefore, being the necessary habiliments of a young lady of rank, she is entitled to retain them."

"Vell, I don't think so; but perhaps there's something else in here; ve ought to see them opened."

Mr. Hutchinson recommended Lucy "to open the wardrobe and drawers, and the doors of the presses in the room;" and, in the course of examining these, they came to a large case of jewels, which very much excited the cupidity of the Jew, and he would have immediately clutched the casket if he had not been afraid of the powerful interposition of Mike.

"That, in particular, I claim as mine," said Isaacs, "it's the family jewels, no doubt, and this paper gives them to me."

"But I say," said Mike, "it's not the family jewels; this case contains the jewels of my mistress, Lady Bewdley, and you'll see her name in gold letters upon it. My lady used, generally, to wear 'em three or four times in the year, and then I was sent over to Swan's Bank, at York, to fetch 'em."

"Yes," said Lucy; "and I used to take them out of the case, and then help my lady to put them on."

"Vell, and don't you prove that they're the family jewels; they came through the aunt?"

"It appears to me very doubtful whether you can have any claim on these jewels," said Mr. Hutchinson; "because you have no evidence to show that Lady Bewdley made them over; for, unless Lady Susan declares that her aunt gave her the jewels, there is no proof of a transfer, and in that case they necessarily continue to be Lady Bewdley's property."

"Vell, I think that's all nonsense; you had better let me have the case, and I'll give you a receipt for it, and return them if I ain't no right to 'em."

Mike smiled at him and shook his head; "I don't know, Mr. Isaacs, but it strikes me that the case of diamonds is as good as the receipt, or a chance better."

Mr. Hutchinson said, "I was not aware of this valuable deposit being here, but I feel it to be my duty to take charge of it for the present; at the same time I have no objection to seal it up with your seal, and to give you a written notification that I have a certain case in my possession, bearing upon it the imprint of Lady Bewdley, with an engagement to produce that same in the event of the decision being in your favour, and to yield it up to you."

This did not perfectly meet Mr. Isaacs' views, though

he thought it would be in vain to resist it; but he said, "that it ought to be opened, and an inventory taken of the contents."

As this did not appear unreasonable to Mr. Hutchinson, he demanded "the key of the servant maid."

Lucy said, "her mistress always kept the key herself; and she supposed she had taken it with her to Lady Trefoil's."

"Von of my chaps vill open the lock in a minute," said the Jew.

"But," said Mr. Hutchinson, "can he lock it again?"

"To be sure," said Isaacs, with an air of contempt.

Accordingly he called the artist up from the yard below, and the box was opened; when, to the surprise of all the parties, it was found to contain nothing but leaves, a few stones and a little cotton on the top. The Jews stared with amazement and horror. Mr. Hutchinson felt rather relieved by the discovery than otherwise; poor Lucy was greatly alarmed; and Mike laughed heartily.

"He knows all about 'em, that fellow does," said Isaacs.

"No," said Mike, "they are entirely out of my line of business; I should never wear one of them, even if the king was to make me a lord."

The Jews conferred earnestly together some time, but finally settled into the opinion that "the old one," as they called Lord Bosworth, "had somehow or other got

possession of the diamonds, and carried them off with him ;” and great was the fury and lamentation of “ the people.”

Lucy was obliged to submit to be searched by women, and all the contents of her boxes were turned over ; but no trace of the jewels or the key could be found.

Mr. Hutchinson replaced the case and insisted on “ the inventory of Lady Susan’s effects being suspended till he should receive a letter from Messrs. Chevron and Pale,” to whom he applied for advice in this critical state of affairs ; in which same letter he urged those gentlemen “ to let him have some able legal assistance and also to furnish him with some money, for Lord Bosworth had taken almost his last shilling, otherwise he must fly, and everything would go to wreck and ruin ;” and the good man also mentioned “ Lord Bosworth’s departure for Maidenthorpe, in consequence of news that the old lady was struck with paralysis ;” and the honest good man passed the next forty-eight hours in a state of alarm and dejection which produced a sad effect on his appearance.

The Jews went on with their work, but the probable loss of Lady Susan’s dresses and jewels gave a dismal tint to their complexions and depressed their spirits.

Lucy and Mike, now that all other birds of their own feather had flown, became better friends than ever they had been before, the latter being much pleased with the girl’s resolute defence of her mistress’s property, and

also touched with her tears ; and Lucy was never before made sensible of the value of the support and assistance of a brave, powerful and kind-hearted man ; and some few kind things being said on each side soon produced a more cordial if not tender feeling than they had ever been sensible of before.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE WEDDING.

THE day succeeding this, which was exceedingly dull at Conquest Hall, was enlivened in London by the marriage of Lady Susan to Bohun, an event which rather surprised some of their friends in that capital.

The kind and gallant Mr. Hargrave carried the beautiful Lady Susan and Mrs. Foster to the church, where the knot was to be tied, at an early hour ; and the poor bridegroom, who was to be made happy that day, was in readiness to hand the ladies out of the carriage, but the side of his face was rather disguised, and the state of his eyes compelled him to wear a green shade.

The ceremony was performed by a curate, and he rather wondered at so very beautiful a creature as Lady Susan throwing herself away on a man apparently so unworthy of her.

When the business of the vestry was concluded the clergyman ventured to say, "upon my word, sir, you possess the most beautiful bride that I ever assisted to assume that title."

The lady felt this as rather a reflection on her husband, and said immediately, "you might have said the happiest, sir."

Each view of the case was gratifying to Bohun ; but the lady's promptness to vindicate her choice was peculiarly delightful : he said to the clergyman "our house is not yet in order, sir, but when we are settled I shall hope to see you some day to eat a mutton chop with us ;" and they parted good friends.

The invited guests at the "*déjeuner à la fourchette*," viz., the admiral and Forrester, were not informed of the wedding before their arrival, and the admiral was at first rather inclined to be offended ; but Mr. Hargrave's assurance "that the dear young lady could not possibly have made a better match," and his great encomiums on Bohun, reconciled the veteran ; and he wished health and happiness to the bride and bridegroom, and agreed to stay to the breakfast.

Bohun took Mr. Hargrave and the admiral apart and said "that he had made an interim settlement," and requested those gentlemen "to be trustees for the time being, till a proper settlement could be prepared by a first-rate conveyancer, and this only stipulated that there should be such an instrument drawn and executed without delay and the trustees appointed by those two gentlemen:" and the purport of the instrument was "to secure Lady Susan the sole interest in the settled estates of her father and of any jointure or annuity therefrom to arise on her coming of age ; also the house and furniture in ——— which was now to be their residence ; and also two policies on the life of the said

Alfred Bohun, which he engaged to maintain and keep in force by duly paying the annual premiums thereon."

This proceeding delighted Mr. Hargrave even more than the admiral, and from that time he really loved him as if he had been his son.

Frank Forrester arrived just after the signing of this by the bride and bridegroom, by the trustees and by Mr. Foster as witness, and he was not a little surprised to find it a wedding. When he had looked round the party he said "hang it, old fellow, you have thrown me over now, with your legal proceedings against the bride's uncle, and your advising the Jews about her father."

"Why, in truth, Frank, I did think it dangerous to take a fascinating young fellow like you into my very inmost confidence about this young lady; but now I have got her we shall always be happy to see you."

"Thank ye, thank ye, but I must say, you're a neat specimen to carry off the very gem of the aristocracy."

"Ah!" said Bohun, "the gem of the aristocracy set in brass."

"Just so," said Frank, "that's very apt."

"No, Mr. Frank," said the bride, "in gold, pure gold, and when my husband has recovered his natural brilliancy you will say that the gem is not worthy of the setting."

Bohun kissed her for taking his part.

"Eh bien, Mrs. Foster," said Forrester, "as I am not entitled to any of these honeymoon bonbons, pray when are we to have breakfast?"



“It’s now ready,” said that lady, and when they sat down to the exquisite dishes that Mr. Hargrave’s cook had prepared for them, every one of the party, even bride and bridegroom, made a hearty meal, and the wines were not neglected, particularly by the admiral, Foster and Forrester.

Bohun could only take a sip of champagne, to drink the health of the party, in return for his dear wife and himself being toasted; and then he revealed “that it was an engagement of two years’ standing;” which he did partly to satisfy Frank that he never had a chance.

This concluded, Mr. Hargrave departed for his place of business, but left his carriage to take the bride and bridegroom, Mrs. Foster and the admiral, up to the intended abode of his young friends, and the latter, assisted by Mrs. Foster, took a complete survey of it, and admired the drawing-room floor, and thought it all well done, and the accommodations quite superior, but Mrs. F. soon carried him away to the vicarage where she told him she was wanted.

The sweet bride was astonished at the elegance and comfort of her abode, and thanked Mrs. Foster most affectionately for the trouble she had taken, and admired her taste in every thing.

Notwithstanding the good breakfast at Mrs. Foster’s the married couple discussed a fowl, which had been provided for their dinner, between five and six o’clock: and in talking over their past hazards and difficulties

Lady Susan said, "the thing that has most shocked my feelings is my father having so associated me with that abominable woman Lady Wolfe."

"Very sad, indeed, my dearest, but we must thank God for your escapes, and then remember that your father is also my father, that he is an utterly ruined, broken, penniless man; and let us consider how he is to be maintained, and make up our minds to some sacrifices, and exert some self-denial to enable us to support him."

"What a wonderful faculty you possess, my dear Alfred, of distinguishing things at a glance, and deciding at once what is to be done, and how good it is of you to undertake in this manner, impromptu as it were, to preserve my father from distress."

Bohun laughed and said "my darling love, there is nothing so off-hand as you imagine in my view, for the moment I saw in the paper that Lord Bosworth was recalled, I knew at once that he must be a burthen on his relations, and I suppose he has drawn pretty good sums from Lady Bewdley already, but now that you are married, that source will be dry, for I doubt whether the old lady will allow him anything."

"Indeed, dear Alfred, my fears are that she will not."

"Well, darling, we must soon try our own fate, and I am right glad that we have saved the jewels,—that is, so I suppose?"

"Oh! yes; I did as you directed, and Mrs. Foster has them in safe custody."

“ Thank you, dearest, if you had not done so, the Jews would have had them, for everything is assigned to them ; and it would have been a sad obstacle to our forgiveness, if, when we knelt to your aunt to pray for it, we had been obliged in the same breath to inform her that you had lost her jewels.”

“ But would not the law have obliged them to give them back ?”

“ Perhaps so, my darling, but with all the stones changed, and no one could have proved the difference.”

“ Thank you again, dearest, for I see that if it had not been for you, they would have been lost too ; oh ! how glad I feel that I have got such an adviser and protector in this wicked world.”

“ Not altogether wicked, sweet one, if we keep steadily on in our own proper sphere we shall have nothing to do with such people, but your father has run entirely out of the course, and has got into very bad connexions, and I believe that beside having mortgaged everything, he is still greatly in debt.”

After this Bohun turned the conversation to pleasanter subjects.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

## BAD NEWS.

THE next morning Bohun was up at eight, and had breakfast, and got to his chambers by nine, according to appointment with Skinner; having prevailed on Lady Susan not to get up, but to wait the arrival of Mrs. Foster, who had promised to be there at half-past ten to assist in her toilette.

There were some trifling things to dispose of in chambers, which our hero got through before the post came in; when, lo! two letters edged with black, one from Mr. Oakley, to inform him of "the death of Lady Bewdley from a paralytic attack, which only seized her on Sunday," and acquainting him "that Lord Bosworth had been sent for, and was hourly expected;" the other was from Mr. Holroyd from York, also dated Monday, mentioning "that the event of Lady Bewdley's illness was imminent," and informing him "that he was executor with Mr. Oakley," and earnestly requested "that he would act," and prayed him "to come down to Maiden-thorpe for the opening of the will."

While he was pondering over these, there came a knock at the door, whereupon he put the letters into his

pocket before the door was opened, when Mr. Pale was admitted, who had come himself, in order that he might prevail upon Mr. Bohun "to go down to Conquest Hall and put to the rout some Jews that were on the premises there, and who had been authorized by Lord Bosworth himself to make free with everything they could lay their hands on; while at the same time, or rather long before, the furniture, fixtures, paintings, musical instruments, and a variety of other things were settled upon the heirs of the marriage of Lord Bosworth and Miss Beatson; and you know that all the land, water, timber, minerals, &c., are mortgaged to your friend Mr. Hargrave and others for very large amounts; therefore Lord Bosworth has no right to assign, and these fellows cannot have the shadow of a legal claim, and I think perhaps you could convince them of it if you went down. I don't wish to apply for a mandamus if I could avoid the expense."

Bohun said, "if he had the settlement, he might prevail upon them by showing that, but he thought the brutes were so greedy and so tenacious of the spoil, that he would not succeed without it."

"But," said Mr. Pale, "that is a very important affair; I am almost afraid to trust such a document out of our office."

"The danger is," said Bohun, "that if these fellows meet with anything of value that is worth taking away privately—a choice picture, for instance—they would hand it off with great pleasure. Mr. Hutchinson is very

trustworthy, and very clever, and he would like to have my authority for clearing the premises of this gang, and also take care of the settlement."

"Then," said Mr. Pale, "I will go home and talk to my partner; and pray, what fee would be proper for the service?"

"Not less than twenty-five guineas, I think," said Bohun, "including expense of travelling."

Mr. Pale then went to consult Mr. Chevron; and Bohun was off to Mr. Hargrave, and said, "that under the circumstances he thought it quite clear that he ought to go, and begged that Mr. Hargrave would take in his dear Lady Susan;" which that gentleman joyfully agreed to, and promised "to send the carriage for her, so as to have an early dinner, half-past five, before he went off by the mail."

In the mean time Mr. Pale had brought the settlement and the cheque, and in addition Bohun gave Skinner a cheque for a similar sum from his own bankers, and told him "to get them cashed," so that he might not be short of money, and also told him "to be off and secure an inside place in the mail to Stone Market;" and he threw a few things into his portmanteau, and took that up to his own house.

When he got up-stairs his wife flew to his arms, when his manner suddenly struck her, and she cried, "what's the matter?"

"You have lost a friend, my dear."

"Tell me, pray tell me; who?"

"Your aunt is gone, my love; died suddenly."

She burst into tears. "I hope I have not been the cause?"

"No, dearest, there was no particular excitement; she could not have heard the result of the ball. She seems to have reached the term of life—peace be with her!"

"Amen," said Lady Susan.

"Mr. Holroyd informs me, in his letter, that I am one of her executors, dearest; she proposed it to me when I was last at Stagbrook, and I agreed to act."

"But you are not going down there?" said his wife with alarm.

"Why, dearest, I have been consulting Mr. Hargrave, and he thinks that, under the circumstances, I should; and he invites you to his house during my absence. I can be with you again darling," he said to the poor weeping bride, "in a week's time, as the funeral will certainly be on Monday. I shall meet your father at Maidenthorpe, and will settle every thing with him; but I would not, on any account, have you present at the discussion; on opening this case, I dread that he will use expressions that you would be distressed by, and I think I can reconcile him to what has taken place, and lead him to avoid anything harsh and unpleasant after my first interview with him. Another thing is, my love, that Messrs. Chevron and Pale have retained me to go to Conquest Hall to drive away the Jews, and arrange

some other things there, and take poor Hutchinson some money, and I think I can make his mind easy. This is my plan, sweetest, and I shall rattle about in the mail coach, and will arrange that you have Lucy and all your clothes sent up here immediately, and Mrs. Foster will assist you in getting your mourning, and I will arrange everything so that Maidenthorpe shall be quite ready to receive you in a few days, and I think you will not be surprised that I should like better to be there with you alone than to have your father with us at the same time."

The lady gave ear to all this, and though she felt great pain at the idea of parting with her husband for a week at this early period, yet the objects in view appeared paramount, and she said "she saw he was right, and, whatever it cost her," (which made the tears flow afresh,) "she should be guided by his superior judgment."

Bohun particularly begged Mrs. Foster "to come and dine at Mr. Hargrave's and bring her husband; for," he said, "he was sure his old friend would prefer it:" and then she hurried home, and there she found an invitation had arrived, and that her husband had accepted it for them both.

We will not dwell on the dinner, and the parting and the journey (indeed it would be very hard to describe the tender adieux), but relate that Bohun arrived at the Hall next morning at nine o'clock, and told his old



friend "he was come to make him comfortable," and begged some breakfast, and washed himself while that was getting ready; and in half an hour he had an audience of the Jews, Mr. Hutchinson being present, when he told the former "that they must not take any of those things which they imagined they had acquired a right to by the conveyance of Lord Bosworth, because that lord had by his marriage settlement surrendered all his right to the trustees in those very things which his lordship had now made over to Mr. Isaacs, and Messrs. Chevron and Pale had employed him to come down here to preserve the property, and entrusted him with the settlement in case it might be necessary to show it to a county magistrate, because his and Mr. Hutchinson's orders were to clear the premises of all parties pretending to take possession of any thing whatever under the present illegal authority from Lord Bosworth."

Mr. Squeeze looked particularly blank, and said, "vy didn't you tell me all this ven I wanted the opinion of you?"

"Why, sir, I told you my opinion that there was a settlement; if I had known the particulars of it I should have informed you at that time: but Mr. Pale says now, 'that if he misses any single article of the property, he will file a bill in Chancery to compel you to restore it.'"

"By ——," said Mr. Isaacs, "I von't lose my money,

I'll prosecute my lord as a swindler if I'm not paid principal, interest and expenses."

"Perhaps," said Bohun, "his lordship may get some legacy upon the death of this old lady; you had better write to him at Maidenthorpe by to-night's post and name a sum. I am going on there, also, to enquire about this old lady's will. It is possible that he may get enough to pay you, and I shall venture to tell him, and so would Chevron and Pale, that he ought to pay you at once as a debt of honour, so write by all means; Mr. Hutchinson will tell you the address."

Bohun then enquired touching magistrates, and finding that Mr. Lodge, the clergyman at Stone Market, was in the commission, he wrote a note to that gentleman, and begged, as a favour, "that he would come over to support Mr. Hutchinson, who was in a situation of some difficulty, in protecting the settled property at the Hall;" and he desired "that Mike should take this over with the phaeton, and bring back Mr. Lodge if he could spare time."

He then went to Lucy, and told her "to take up her own box and what she would be able to carry of Lady Susan's things, and particularly what her ladyship was most likely to want, and to pack up the rest of the things in boxes and let Mike forward them by the van;" and he gave Lucy the address of Lady Susan, "at Mr. Hargrave's in Grosvenor Square," where he said, "she would find her ladyship very comfortable."

He then gave Mr. Hutchinson twenty-five pounds for himself and eight pounds to be divided between the two servants, and he told him, in strict confidence, of "the alliance, and that he would be his, Hutchinson's, fast friend, and he thought he should have the principal voice in all things relating to the estate in future, but that at present he must regard it as a profound secret, for neither Lord Bosworth or Chevron and Pale knew anything of it."

The old man was so affected that he could not help shedding some tears. "Ah!" he said, "Mr. Bohun, if you take to it I shall see some happiness before I die."

Mr. Lodge arrived shortly, and he and Bohun had amicable explanation of the case with the Hebrews and they walked off, Mr. Squeeze remarking that "it vas no go."

Bohun saw the letter, but did not advise as to the contents, and said, "if it was agreeable to Mr. Isaacs he would take it across the country and put it into the post on the other road, otherwise it would go to London first and two days would be lost."

There was much more energy than refinement in Mr. Isaacs' letter. His lordship was told that "the attornies of the writer informed him that obtaining money under false pretences was swindling, the punishment for which was transportation, so now Lord Bosworth knew what he had to expect."

The letter was given to Mike to put into the post, and the latter gladly drove Mr. Bohun across to the other

road, and when they arrived at the post-town the letter was posted, and Mike, as they parted, said, "Well, your honour, they say when things come to the worst they must mend, and I hope you'll be the man to set them to rights here."

"I won't take upon me to say that, Mike, but I never saw a concern more completely bogged than this, and I don't think Lord Bosworth is the man to get the waggon out of the ruts; so, perhaps, if things turn out right I may have to set my shoulder to the wheel; but I shan't say any more till I see you at Maidenthorpe, and I wish you to come over as soon as Lucy has packed all the things and you have dispatched them by van."

They then parted, and as Bohun had to wait some time for the down coach, he took the opportunity of getting some dinner, after which he pursued his journey by coach and post-chaise and arrived at Maidenthorpe about midnight.

He had written to Mr. Oakley from London, "that his engagements there delayed his departure, but that he expected to get down late on Thursday night, and begged his friend to have a bed in readiness for him on his arrival at *Maidenthorpe*;" and he had in the same letter requested him "to arrange for the funeral taking place at as early a period as might be satisfactory to Lord Bosworth;" and also to appoint "Mr. Holroyd to attend at Maidenthorpe the day after his arrival;" and he had taken the precaution to write to Mr. Holroyd

himself from London to suggest the same thing “for the purpose of reading the will, and making final arrangements.” At the same time he sent a polite message to Lord Bosworth, on the presumption that his lordship’s arrival would precede his own, and expressed “his deep regret that his last interview with Lady Bewdley, in which she had treated him with great kindness, was never to be repeated.”



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE WILL.

WHEN he arrived at Maidenthorpe he retired to bed after a very slight refreshment, saying that “partly from fatigue, and partly owing to illness, he was entirely incapable of any discussion whatever.”

At nine o'clock the next morning, however, he made his appearance at the breakfast table quite an altered man; he was trimly shaved, but had a shade to protect his eyes; and his old friend Mr. Hallifax had renovated or removed the plaisters on his face, so that his figure and appearance were not much to be objected to.

He was not a little surprised to find Lord Bosworth ready to take his seat at the breakfast table, and they conversed freely and cheerfully at the same time that they both made a hearty meal.

Immediately that it was finished, Bohun rose to take a walk, and look round the place, on which his lordship said he desired “to have some conversation with him,” and they accordingly withdrew to the drawing-room for that purpose.

His lordship began by stating “that it gave him great pleasure to say, that ‘his relative, the departed lady, had

left his friend Mr. Bohun a legacy of two thousand pounds;’” and his lordship went on to say that “he presumed she was moved to do that by her recollection of the great service rendered to her in the preservation of her own life, and that of Lady Susan; and he trusted that the legacy would be accepted in that sense, notwithstanding Mr. Bohun had refused any aid that he, Lord Bosworth, had proposed to afford him.”

“It is a great gratification to me,” said Bohun, “that her ladyship has given this proof of her kindness and regard, and I see no reason for declining the boon she has bestowed upon me; as to her motives, I would rather wait to see what the will expresses on that subject than assume a reason, or even acquiesce in the conclusion of your lordship.”

“Oh! Mr. Bohun, that is the general scope of the will; there are, also, as I am informed, some trifling legacies given to the servants, the legacy to yourself which I have spoken of, and a thousand pounds to Mr. Oakley, the clergyman of this place. With the exception of these legacies, most proper in themselves, and most satisfactory to me, the whole of my sister’s property is left to my daughter Lady Susan, it is, Mr. Bohun, entirely a family matter.”

“And pray, my lord, has her ladyship made this will without appointing executors?”

“No, my dear sir, she has named you and Mr. Oakley;’ but it seems to me that it would be causing

you and that worthy person a great deal of anxiety to go through the trouble and expense of acting, which is quite unnecessary. It struck me that if you and he were to decline to act, I might administer, and pay your and the other legacies, and might afterwards invest the remainder of the property in such a way as would be most for the advantage of my beloved daughter."

"Well, my lord, Mr. Holroyd is expected here with the will at twelve o'clock, which, I am, as your lordship is aware, summoned down to this place for the purpose of hearing read, and I should certainly refrain from committing myself in any manner, till I have a thorough knowledge of the circumstances of the case."

"Your colleague, sir, has thought my suggestion quite reasonable, and that it must be perfectly satisfactory to all the legatees."

"I should not presume, my lord, to contest any decision of the gentleman you call my colleague, but I may see reason to dissent from his conclusion if he desires that arrangement spoken of by your lordship."

"I am afraid, Mr. Bohun, you are reasoning as a lawyer on this question, and that it is your interest to get my child's estate into Chancery."

Bohun was very glad of this rudeness and replied immediately, in the most conciliatory tone, "Upon my word, my lord, you misapprehend my views; probably you no more than I have heard the will read, and I must say, it is so necessary to know the grounds on



which we stand, that I am compelled to decline any further discussion previous to the authentication of that important document, and I must beg a short interval for the purpose of making one or two visits previous to the arrival of Mr. Holroyd."

Soon after noon Lord Bosworth, Canon Altham, Mr. Oakley, Bohun and Mr. Holroyd were assembled at Maidenthorpe to hear the important will read. It commenced by stating "that she appointed the Reverend Mr. Oakley and Mr. Bohun her executors, and left them each one thousand pounds, and she bequeathed one thousand pounds additional to Mr. Bohun for his important services." After mentioning various "legacies to the servants," and an addition of "one hundred pounds to Mike Somerton," she bequeathed "all the remainder of her property to the above-named executors, in trust for the exclusive use and benefit of her niece, Lady Susan Altham, directing that in the event of her marriage with Lord Westcliff it should not be subject to his control," and the same provision if, in case of his death, "she married any other husband." She also bequeathed to her niece, Lady Susan, "her jewels, plate, furniture, wine, books, musical instruments and the whole contents of her house," and constituted her "residuary legatee;" and she enclosed a paper, sealed up and directed to her executors, containing the best description she was able to give of her property. Bohun broke this open and read it, and

found that the Consols were reduced to eight thousand five hundred pounds.

The countenances of the noble lord and the reverend dignitary from York certainly betrayed no very gratified feeling on the occasion, and, after a pause, Bohun broke the silence by requesting Mr. Holroyd "to take charge of the documents and proceed immediately to act for the executors in carrying into effect the directions of the testatrix."

"Then you mean to act as sole executor and trustee, Mr. Bohun," said Lord Bosworth.

"I should do so, certainly, my lord, in the event of Mr. Oakley declining to act; but I trust he will not leave the wishes of his old friend unfulfilled."

"If *you* are determined to act, Mr. Bohun," said Mr. Oakley, "it is certainly better that I also should assume the duty Lady Bewdley has imposed upon me; and, indeed, I should scruple to receive the legacy did I fail to fulfil her expectation and appointment."

There was after this a general silence, and Mr. Holroyd began tying up the will and other papers, and delivered over to the executors a copy, reminding them of "the necessity of providing immediately for the safe custody of the valuable property mentioned in the will," which Bohun requested Mr. Oakley to undertake, and Mr. Holroyd requested "that they would appoint a person to take an inventory, and make a valuation of all

the personal property;" and recommended them "to keep the old lady's effects as much as possible under lock."

Mr. Holroyd then said "he must return to York;" and the arrangements which had been agreed upon for the funeral were talked over with that gentleman, and his attendance secured, after which he took some refreshment; and the reverend Canon Altham was not sorry to return to York in the same chaise with Mr. Holroyd.

Mr. Oakley found it very necessary to go home, so that Bohun and Lord Bosworth were left alone in the house; and the former, thinking that they were not in the very best humour for a tête à tête, betook himself to the garden, where he was able to indulge in the reflection of the independence and comfort that were now secured to his beloved wife, with a sense of profound happiness, which for some time absorbed his mind and heart, the only alloy being the impossibility of at once sharing this great delight with her. After a few turns he thought that, to calm his feelings, he would take a walk to the stables, where he had the pleasure to shake hands with his old friend Mike, who had just arrived, and it occurred to him to direct that, in the event of Lord Bosworth making any inquiries about his daughter, he should answer "that Mr. Hutchinson said 'it was all right about her ladyship.'" He had before informed Mike *what* had made all right; and that, and the result

of the will, and the improvement in Bohun's health had made the worthy fellow almost too happy to sympathize externally with the gloom which it was the order of the day to exhibit at Maidenthorpe.



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## EXPLANATION.

DINNER time arrived, and Lord Bosworth sat down with Bohun, determined to betray as little as he could of the vindictive feeling that agitated him. His companion was attentive, complaisant, deferential, and soothing to the utmost, so that the other could hardly sustain, at boiling point, the indignation that he had bottled up in store for Bohun, and he bethought himself of attempting to expostulate with the latter on the precipitate decision he had made in the morning; but finding Mr. Executor immoveable, he then said he “expected to have continued an intercourse of friendship and kindness with Bohun, but after his outrageous offence on this occasion he could never again desire to see him at Conquest Hall.”

“My lord,” said Bohun, “you must excuse my venturing to be so plain with your lordship as to remind you of the state of your own circumstances, with which I happen to be perfectly acquainted, having been yesterday at Conquest Hall by the request of your solicitors to see if it was possible to save anything out of the wreck, but I find that all must go except family portraits, some few

other heir-looms and some ornamental timber, but even that cannot be saved without a contest which I imagine your lordship has no funds to carry on. The coachman, Mike, as they call him, has returned home and says, 'that the servants are all turned out without their wages, and the auctioneer is already employed in cataloguing everything preparatory to a sale;' perhaps your lordship would like to see this man."

"No, no; I dare say the rapacious devils are robbing me of every thing; but, were it not for your infatuated obstinacy, my daughter's fortune, properly disposed of, might have averted all this horrible catastrophe, which, I am afraid, will kill her, poor thing."

"That may be your lordship's view of the case, but, as the trustee of Lady Susan, I feel that nothing could be more wrong than to sell her good freehold landed estate, left by Lady Bewdley, and chuck the proceeds into a vortex of law, lawyers and ruin."

"I hope, sir, you do not pretend to assume the entire control and direction of Lady Susan's pecuniary affairs; she would be guided in such matters by more elevated feelings than your grovelling nature can comprehend."

"Then, my lord, I back on the precise directions of Lady Bewdley's will, which I shall carry into effect to the letter."

"I dare say, sir, *to the letter*, but if that lamented lady were here she would tell you her wish was to regard *the spirit*, the family feeling, to give free effect to the

love of a daughter for her father, and I only wonder that she could have entrusted the execution of her will to a stony-hearted lawyer, a man hardened against all the sympathies and affections of the human heart."

"Permit me to remind you, my lord, that I was not consulted about the making of Lady Bewdley's will, but in carrying it out I am confined to the path of duty, and ought not to be influenced by any bias of affection; in the present instance, however, duty and affection concur, because my regard for Lady Susan will render it highly grateful to me to secure as best I can the property bequeathed to her."

"Impudent puppy! to talk of *your* affection for my daughter, she would scorn such a fellow, or she is no daughter of mine."

"Excuse me, my lord, for recalling to your recollection my first visit to this house. I was then the wounded knight—your daughter the grateful compassionate princess of the castle—and it happened, according to the style of ancient romaunts, that pity for my sufferings changed afterwards to a more tender sentiment; a feeling, in short, which has caused her ladyship to regard me, my character, and my pretensions from a point of view totally different from that chosen by your lordship."

"Then, sir, can you dare to acknowledge that you took advantage of a situation, charitably afforded you, to seduce the affections of my daughter?"

"My lord, I was only here eleven days, and for great

part of the time helpless, and speechless, and as soon as it was possible to remove me, I engaged a lodging in the village, and caused myself to be transported to it."

"Ah! then, perhaps, your vanity and presumption have misled you."

"Pardon me, my lord, before I left this country the mutual feeling was perfectly understood; but I took the honourable part of advising Lady Susan to take two years for consideration, and for acquiring such knowledge and experience of the world, as would enable her to judge better what course would contribute to her permanent happiness."

"If you did, as you say, then I hope she has now perceived that such a match would be highly derogatory to her."

"That conclusion also, my lord, is erroneous. Indeed, you enforced the contrary conviction upon her, by insisting on her marrying a man she detested."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you made a pecuniary bargain of a particular nature with Lord Westcliff, the terms of which I accidentally got a knowledge of; and it made me decide to come down to Conquest Hall to ascertain what the sentiments of Lady Susan were after the lapse of two years, and whether she was a willing party to the contract you proposed for her."

"Well, sir, and what then?"

"My lord, your daughter threw herself into my arms."



“Audacious villain ! you don’t mean to say that you have carried off my daughter ?”

“The very truth is, my lord, that your daughter and I are husband and wife ; and great and glorious as that alliance may be to me, I venture to tell your lordship that your daughter sustains no disgrace by her choice of a man whose character stands superior to calumny, who possesses ample means to provide for her comfort and independence, and whose chief object it will ever be to make her happy.”

“Stuff ! I shall insist on a divorce.”

“I hardly need remind your lordship that proceedings in the civil courts are both tedious and expensive. Lady Susan will be of age before it would be possible to get a decision of the case, which, after all, would, as I am confident, determine the validity of the marriage ; but were that in the least doubtful, could she possibly do otherwise than secure her honour and her happiness. And now, my lord, allow me to remind you that this day has been spent in discussions which have been very painful to my feelings, and I am physically incapable of continuing them ; and I shall go out to divert my mind by some idle gossip with the apothecary of the village, and I shall wait till the time arrives when we can talk upon the business calmly and sensibly.”

Bohun knew that every thing had been said that the case required, and that it would do harm to prolong the conversation, of which he could not alter the tone ; and,

moreover, he trusted, as actually happened, that the noble peer, to whom solitude was intolerable, would betake himself to the clergyman for society, and he assured himself that in that quarter violent measures would be deprecated. This conjecture was, in fact, realized; and when Lord Bosworth went there he had made up his mind not to touch upon the subject which was uppermost in his mind, but the conversation naturally took a turn to what had passed at Stagbrook in former times, and at last, "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." His lordship forgot his resolution, and could not help making known "that this marriage had taken place, and that it was a grievous affront, and a horrid shock to his feelings to suffer such a disappointment of his views respecting his daughter."

After he had descanted some time on this theme, Mrs. Oakley, who was a very great friend of our hero, and had heard much of the character and circumstances of this lord, and was also a much bolder person than her husband, and knew the utter break up of the family fortunes, and that the talent, energy and position of Bohun must place in his hands the sole management of all family affairs, suggested "that these alliances often turned out better than first apprehended; and that, if Lady Susan had made this love match, it was a comfort to think that her husband was a perfect gentleman;" also "that he had attained great eminence in his profession, and enjoyed a lucrative practice; and that the

introduction of new blood was often a very beneficial thing for a family."

"Very likely, madam, but he had no right to interfere with the management of my family; I had secured a noble alliance for my daughter, and I will endeavour to punish him for thwarting my views, which I see that he is thoroughly inclined to."

The lady said, "Lord Westcliff, I believe?"

"Perhaps so, madam."

"But is not your lordship aware that Lord Westcliff is a ruined man?"

"I have not the least reason for thinking so, madam."

"I am surprised, my lord, how you can have been kept in the dark."

Mr. Oakley then held forth on "the advantages of peace in families, and the sacred nature of the marriage vow, that disputes caused the waste of money in law, which might be productive of much comfort if properly appropriated; and in consideration of the kindness and benevolence of Lord Bosworth, and his affection for his daughter, he very earnestly implored his lordship to allow him to be the mediator between him and Mr. Bohun, under the idea, that though that gentleman could not be expected to give up Lady Susan, he might in other matters be induced to consent to such reasonable terms of arrangement as he Mr. Oakley should recommend."

Perceiving that this, and a few other arguments and

suggestions of a like nature had made considerable impression on the mind of his lordship, he then proposed, "that Mrs. Oakley and he should breakfast with his lordship and their friend Bohun to-morrow, which would do away with the appearance of any ill-feeling, and after that he might take the young man out, and reason with him on the affair, in order to bring matters to such a position as would be satisfactory to his lordship."

This was finally acquiesced in (though rather sulkily) by the peer, but the sufficing reason really was that that noble person happened to be in the peculiarly awkward position which our brethren westward of the Atlantic call "a fix;" that is to say, he had not five pounds in his pocket, and knew of no source of replenishment but through Bohun, who had acquired the dispensation of Lady Susan's legacy, the only family property now left, for he looked upon the diamonds of the old lady as gone; and he saw that it would be fruitless to contend with so able and determined a person as his son-in-law manifestly was.

The painful feeling resulting from this conclusion for once disturbed his lordship's rest, and he turned the case in all ways in the hope of finding a chance of escape, but sleep on some terms was essential, and at last he settled down in the conviction that only one course was left open, namely, to put the best face he could on it, and yield with dignity, provided Oakley made a handsome bargain for him. He then recollected

that he would be saved all trouble by having the gratuitous aid of a very able man in contesting any points that might arise with creditors and lawyers, and afterwards fell into as sound a sleep as if there had been nothing but the claims of creditors to disturb it.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## FINAL ARRANGEMENT.

BOHUN parted from his lordship early in the afternoon, and when he got into the open air, and reflected on what had passed, he became extremely indignant at the treatment he had received, and in the course of his deliberations it occurred to him that perhaps Lord Bosworth had not received the letter of Mr. Isaacs; and yet how could it be otherwise? He then decided that he could not have opened it; and suddenly it struck him that it would be best to give his lordship time for a review of his circumstances, and possibly of his conduct; and on still further reflection, he thought he would go over to York and advise with Mr. Holroyd as to the final settlement of this affair with Lord Bosworth, and put it into his hands if he would undertake it. He therefore consulted Mike about getting to York that night, who said he would drive him over in three hours in the carriage, if he liked to go, but that there was the chance of the coach which passed through Stagbrook having room, so he thought that would be the least trouble, and put the few things he wanted into his pocket, and the coach carried him over in less than two

hours, and he secured a bed at the Royal Hotel, and then called on Mr. Holroyd to enquire "whether he could have a conference with that gentleman the following morning at ten o'clock?" which being agreed to, they separated for the night, and each of them went early to bed, though Bohun before doing so wrote to his dear wife a tender letter, telling her "he must abstain from business at present, further than informing her that she was the heiress, and that the funeral was to take place on Monday, and there might be some little matters to detain him, but he would set off for London as soon after it as he could."

Our hero got a much-needed good night's rest; but at ten o'clock next morning was with Mr. Holroyd, and led into the case by relating his conversation with Lord Bosworth, which of course thoroughly opened the subject, and he said, "that at the time of marrying Lady Susan, neither of them had an idea of Lady Bewdley's illness, or had any acquaintance with the purport of her will."

"Well," said Mr. Holroyd, "I congratulate you on your alliance, for Lady Susan is a charming creature, but her father and her uncle are irreclaimable."

"That saves me the necessity of putting to you a question, for you have exactly stated my view of their characters, and relieved me from any discussion on that subject."

Bohun then went into the story about "Lord Bosworth raising four hundred pounds from the Jews on a lot of articles, including the family jewels, that had been conveyed to the trustees of the marriage settlement, and the consequences that had ensued upon it, and staid that the Jew, Mr. Isaacs, had written a letter, which Mike put into the post, of a very threatening nature, which Bohun thought his lordship had not opened, for they informed him that they intended to proceed criminally against him for raising money under false pretences, which ought to have alarmed him."

"Oh!" said Mr. Holroyd, "I know these two brothers very well; if they don't like the look of a letter, they never open it. My neighbour, the divine, was once assailed by a creditor on the grounds 'that his account had been standing so long that he was quite tired of waiting;' to which the Canon replied, 'that his account had better sit down, for he could not settle it at present.'"

Bohun said, "the dread of this prosecution by the Jews might assist in influencing Lord Bosworth to leave this country and settle at Brussels. I suggest that Capital because he would hardly keep within bounds at Paris. My own intention is to persevere in work at the Bar, and he would plague me to death if he were in London; and now, can you advise me what per annum I should allow him?"



“I would not like to propose the amount, for I am not on good terms with those people, so that, perhaps, I should not be liberal in my judgment.”

“It has occurred *to me*,” said Bohun, “to pay about two hundred pounds per annum for his furnished lodgings, one hundred pounds per annum for a valet, fifty pounds for dress, and thirty shillings per day to spend (say, five hundred and fifty pounds per annum), making in all nine hundred pounds.”

“He may live extremely well at Brussels for that,” said Mr. Holroyd. “I think it is much more than he deserves. It is more than a field-marshal’s pay in Belgium, and quite a nobleman’s income.”

“And now, my dear sir, can you yourself spare time for a trip to Brussels for the purpose of carrying this plan into effect, by taking him there at once and placing him? The upper part of the town is pleasant and cheerful, but the main thing is to secure the *daily* payments, for if he have any amount in hand away it goes to the gaming table; and that I shall be able to arrange through Mr. Hargrave’s influence with one of the bankers there, on condition of my paying the allowance half-yearly always in advance; in which case the lodging and the valet must be paid monthly by the banker, but not in advance. I shall be exceedingly obliged if you can do this, and most happy to pay for your time and expenses; and I think I can manage that you have Mr. Hargrave’s

authority for these payments at Brussels in six days after the journey can be agreed upon."

"If I go," said Mr. Holroyd, "which I cannot determine upon at once, this business of Lady Bewdley's must be entirely suspended."

"Yes, my dear sir, but that is of no consequence in comparison of Lord Bosworth. I wish I could contrive that he knew of the ferocity of the Jews at being robbed."

"Well," said Mr. Holroyd, "we understand the subject fully now, and I will look into my affairs and write to you this evening at Maidenthorpe. I cannot ask you to dine because this matter will now engross me for the day, but *I* can use one argument in the discussion that you perhaps might not choose to bring forward, namely, that this estate of Lady Bewdley's, which she has left to the young lady, is in no sense the property of the Bosworth family. He has had all that and spent it, and the *family* jewels are gone too; and since Lady Susan landed in England, a year ago, all the money disbursed both in London and at Conquest Hall has been supplied by Lady Bewdley, owing to that infatuation about making her niece a marchioness, the importance of which has been eternally inculcated by Canon Altham."

"Well," said Bohun, "she is worthy of any rank, but I trust she never will be a marchioness, and the Canon has had his reward."

Bohun drew a cheque on London for fifty pounds, and

Mr. Holroyd walked with him to Swan's Bank and got it cashed, when Mr. Holroyd introduced him as "Lady Bewdley's executor," and he left forty pounds in the hands of Mr. Holroyd and kept the remainder. After which they parted, and Bohun returned in a post-chaise to Maidenthorpe, and took with him a brace of partridges, lest the estate should not have supplied any to the house, and he reached home about five o'clock.

When Bohun left the house he told them "he was going to York, and would only be back in time for dinner next day."

The breakfast party was therefore a trio only, and Mr. and Mrs. Oakley were much disappointed by his absence, which frustrated the object of the party, and soon after breakfast the parson and his wife went home and left the peer alone.

After enduring this for a short time he went to the stables and saw Mike there, and remembering him, said, "I think you drove me across the country to the York road?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And when did you leave Conquest Hall?"

"I got here early yesterday; I can't justly say what time I started. I came in the night best part of the way."

"Did you see some strange people there when you came away?"

"Perhaps you mean them Jews, my lord?"

"Yes; and had they taken almost every thing away?"

"No, my lord; Mr. Hutchinson said they had no right to the property and stopp'd 'em, and he got Mr. Lodge up to look at the document, I think they call'd it, that Messrs. Somebody and another sent from London, and Mr. Lodge sent for the constable and stopp'd their game entirely."

"And did they get the jewels?"

"Whose jewels, my lord?"

"Why, the jewels my daughter wore."

"Oh! I suppose you mean my old lady's. Oh! no, my lord, you beat 'em there," said Mike, with an arch look.

"What do you mean, you fool?"

"Well, my lord, there was some fun about that, and if you'll give me leave I'll tell you all about it;" and receiving a nod of assent he accordingly related the tale exactly, concluding it by quoting the expression of Mr. Isaacs, "that 'the old one,' meaning your lordship, 'had got them.'"

"Then, by ——! the jewels are stolen."

"Well, my lord, they wasn't under my care, and I'm sure *I* know nothing about 'em."

"Where's the maid-servant?"

"That's more than I can say for certain, my lord, but I'm pretty sure she's on the way to London."

“How do you know she’s gone to London?”

“When Mr. Bohun was down on Thursday he told her to go, and I make no doubt as she’s gone.”

“Then, I suppose, he knows about the jewels?”

“No, my lord, he went to London with the great rich gentleman on Sunday, and the Jews were down upon the diamonds on Monday, not long after you went away; and when I came back there was a rumpus up in Lucy’s chamber, and I went up to see there was no harm done, and so I saw all the fun.”

“Fun! you call it, eh?”

“Yes, my lord, I’m sure if you’d seen them Jews when the jewel case was opened, and the diamonds warn’t in it, you would never ha’ forgot it; that Isaacs, as they call him, looked as savage as the very devil himself.”

“Yes,” said his lordship, “but that does not give any information about the jewels.”

“It’s a good thing for Lady Susan that my old lady can’t call her to account about ’em, for she’d never have forgiven her, she set such a wonderful store by ’em. Mr. Swan told me once ‘that they was worth fifteen hundred pounds.’”

“You say Mr. Bohun was there on Thursday, what did he say to the Jews?”

“Why, my lord, he said they’d no right to any of the things they wanted to take; and that was the same as the Reverend Mr. Lodge from Stone Market, who’s a

justice of the peace, said ; and he went over them parchments that Mr. Bohun brought from t'other lawyers in London, and then Mr. Lodge had the constable, and said the Jews were to be stopp'd from taking the things ; and then it was that this Isaacs wrote the letter to your lordship and I put it into the post."

" Who told him my direction ?"

" Mr. Hutchinson, my lord."

His lordship then adverted to his " having received a grim-looking sort of letter which he had not opened," and his curiosity being rather excited as to what these fellows might say, or rather perhaps do, he went indoors, and found the letter, the contents of which were as follows :—

" Conquest Hall.

" SIR,—MY LORD, (as they call you.)

" I should be glad to know when I am to have my money paid back, four hundred pounds, and interest and expenses ; which Mr. Squeeze, my attorney, says ' won't amount to less than five hundred pounds in all.' Mr. Squeeze says, its ' obtaining money under false pretences, and he'll get you transported,' and so you ought to be, for I never heard of such a do as taking the diamonds out of the case, in all my life.

" Yours according,

" SIMEON ISAACS."

This and Bohun's decided conduct completely floored the noble lord. The facts he had been made acquainted

with were patent, he could neither contradict or evade them, and he really thought the diamonds were gone, though not through the channel he had destined for them ; and of the four hundred pounds he had raised not long back he now possessed only four. The lord rather lamented the absence of his daughter, whom he had before obliged to part with money when he wanted it ; but now he knew not where she was, for of course he did not suspect her of living in "the hutch," as he called Bohun's chambers in the Temple.

On Bohun's return he got out of the chaise at the end of the town, and paid the driver ; for he thought perhaps his father-in-law might take a freak to go to York, if he gave him a chance ; and, besides, he wanted to look in on the Oakleys. He could not wait to hear their story, but said, "he had, with the assistance and advice of Mr. Holroyd, struck out a plan for disposing of his lordship, and he begged them to support it ; and, above all, to lend him no money."

The lord and his son-in-law dined together on exceedingly polite and civil terms, for the peer was no more prepared for contention than the lawyer ; and after dinner they sent to ask "Mr. and Mrs. Oakley to drink tea ;" which the latter accepted, and explained "that her husband was devoted to serious matters, and could not leave home ;" so the party was made as cheerful as circumstances permitted, and at ten o'clock all went to bed.

The lord saw that his fate was in the hands of Bohun,

and felt more nonplus'd and subdued than he ever was before, for escape from the Jews was indispensable ; but in spite of everything he slept at last, and was only just in time for breakfast next morning.

Bohun was up with the lark ; and with Mike took a little survey of the property, and heard about the conference of yesterday, and asked among other things " when the servants' wages were paid at Maidenthorpe ? " and was informed " that it was quarterly, and that Mr. Stokes had forty-five pounds per annum, paid at the same time as the rest."

" Then, Mike, I shall clear him off the premises, for I don't like dealers in arsenic."

A very clever explanatory letter arrived from Mr. Holroyd by the post respecting the future of Lord Bosworth, and the peer was very glad to take advantage of the arrangement proposed.





## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## CONCLUSION.

TO return to London: Poor Lady Susan had received daily letters from Maidenthorpe till Tuesday morning, when there was a blank, and she could not sustain the silence of her husband; and when she met Mr. Hargrave and Mr. and Mrs. Foster at dinner in very low spirits, she explained her despondency by telling them "that she had received no letter that day."

"Don't blame Alfred for that, my dear," said Mr. Hargrave, "for of course there's no post from Stagbrook on Sunday."

"Oh! bless him, I am glad to hear he has not neglected me, and when do you think we shall see him?"

"I think he will certainly be here on Thursday, he will naturally get through the business as quickly as he can, and if he cannot accomplish everything himself at any rate he can give directions."

"Oh! dear," said the lady, sighing, "what an age it is, two days more!"

At this moment there was a knock at the door. "Mind, let nobody be admitted," said Mr. Hargrave; when in the next minute in walked Bohun himself,

wiping the dust off his face ; he clasped his Susan in his arms, and she almost fainted with delight.

He admitted "that he might be rather tired, having started as soon as the funeral was over, and travelled above two hundred miles without stopping."

It was some time before he was able to salute all the party ; but at last dinner was resumed, and he ate like the rest, but drank no wine, for fear of inflaming his eyes.

He afterwards told them "that Lord Bosworth had determined to live abroad, as his lordship thought he would be more happy and cheerful there than in England, and it had been agreed between them that he should have nine hundred pounds per annum, paid in a manner that would very well suit his lordship's convenience."

Lady Susan was highly gratified to hear that her father was made comfortable, and felt more delighted with her husband than ever, and did not trouble him with enquiry about details, as Bohun told her "that Brussels was a very pleasant place, and that her father was then at Hull, under the escort of Mr. Holroyd, who was gone with him to make all necessary arrangements and pay all expenses."

But the next morning, when Bohun went to arrange about money matters with Mr. Hargrave, he gave the old gentleman a full account of the incidents of the tour, and the events both at Conquest Hall and at Maiden-

thorpe, and vastly amused was his old friend at the saving of the diamonds, the fury of the Jews, and the hauteur of the penniless lord ; and the dispatch, address and prompt decision of Bohun, ingrafted in the mind of the old gentleman an opinion that he was the man, and the only man, able to relieve him of the load of his business ; but that was not then spoken of.

Then came the honeymoon at Maidenthorpe, and the bride and bridegroom and their friends there were full of happiness, and every one in the neighbourhood rejoiced to see such kind and agreeable people in the old house. Lady Susan ordered a handsome monument to be erected to her aunt, of whose kindness and benefits she thought with tears ; and soon made her husband carry her to the spot where they first saw one another, to recall to her memory all the circumstances of that event that first gave her the prospect of safety after the most frightful danger, but which also in the result promised her lasting happiness.

Mike was established as coachman and bailiff, and married Lucy ; and a nice house was built for them.

The events of Conquest Hall had an unfavourable result for the marquess and his ally Captain Smith. Orders were dispatched from the Horse Guards to put the captain under arrest, which were abortive, for the latter was not to be found ; his sword and uniform were left, and many things which he thought might encumber his retreat, but all the money which he had obtained from the marquess and won from Lord Bosworth accom-

panied his flight; and the marquess was commanded to attend at the Horse Guards, and was most severely reprimanded, and the regiment soon embarked for the East Indies; and his fate would have been worse if the fugitive had been captured. That hero soon parted with beard, moustaches and whiskers, and even thought it better to hide his pistols, and he contrived to exchange his clothes, and made his appearance in Liverpool a very different-looking character from what he was at barracks, so that at Liverpool he got on board a French vessel, bound for Bordeaux; but the skipper, having acquired a knowledge of the money he carried in his pocket, the ship arrived without him—the report being that he fell overboard, another way of telling that he was murdered and thrown into the sea.

The happy couple had the admiral and Forrester to spend a few days with them at Conquest Hall, in their journey south, after a delightful residence of six weeks at Maidenthorpe. Frank got an introduction to the fair widow and was enraptured, and as the lady had declined a voyage to the East perhaps he was successful.

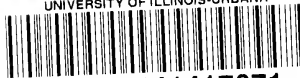
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